

REVEALED: WHY ALONSO HAD TO LEAVE ALPINE



INSIDE...

"I SAW THE MECHANICS STARTING TO RUN AWAY..."

MIKA HÄKKINEN ON HIS FIRST F1 TEST AND MORE

STAYING POWER

How Lewis Hamilton is turbocharging Mercedes' revival

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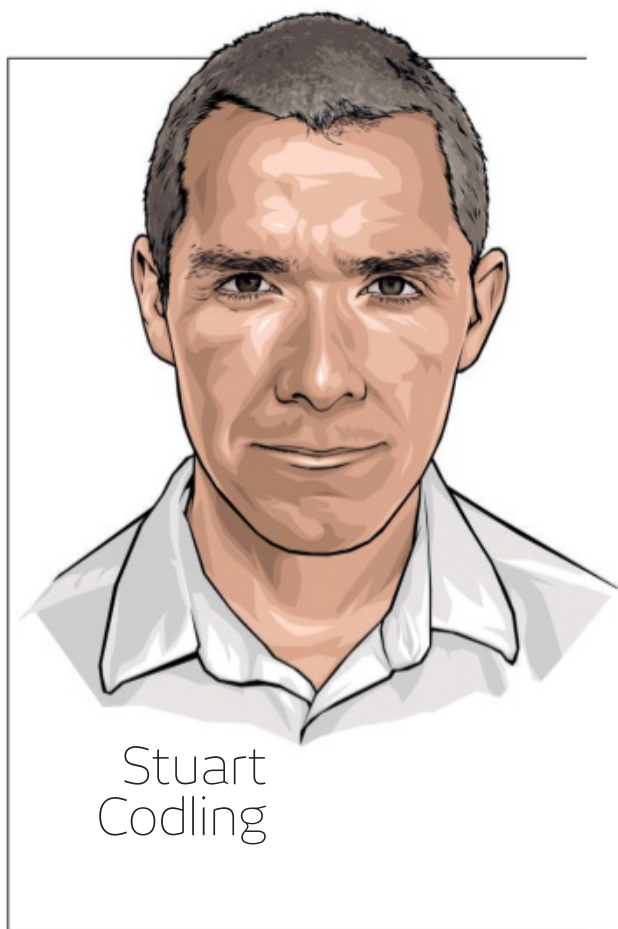
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Don't write Lewis Hamilton off just yet

Lewis Hamilton is a driver who comes through unfiltered. He can't – or won't – mask his emotions. They play out in raw form across his face (and over the team radio) whether he wins or loses.

Early on this season there were those who would write him off as a spent force – prematurely, as it turns out, and based on fundamental misunderstandings of both the man himself and how top-level motor racing works. Post-Imola, the twittering twonks of the tabloid press (and their ilk) were calling on him to retire while the going was good; an easy statement to make when you've never had to launch a Formula 1 car off the wet side of a grid when the other side is dry...

Andrew Benson had compiled and filed his excellent analysis of where Lewis is and his ongoing importance to Mercedes (p30), when driver and team delivered an emphatic confirmation of it. At Zandvoort Lewis had an outside chance of winning the race, albeit based on the risky proposition of him not pitting for fresh tyres while the course was neutralised. In the moment Lewis was frustrated, thinking the team had called it wrong. Actually it was backing him to perform his unique magic. Pitting both Lewis and George Russell at that point was likely to screw both their races, explained team boss Toto Wolff. And if anyone can make the most of defending track position on old tyres, it's Lewis Hamilton.

What the Dutch Grand Prix proved beyond doubt was that Lewis is as motivated, ambitious

and hungry as ever, and that Mercedes needs him almost as never before.

Another hot topic playing out tiresomely in the court of public opinion is, post-Monza, whether races should be permitted to end under Safety Car conditions. It's a debate which will never reach a satisfactory conclusion, since whatever so-called solution is found will almost inevitably produce new and similarly dissatisfactory scenarios.

There's no doubt races should, ideally, finish competitively rather than as a neutralised procession. This is a discussion which has already been had, in the wake of the 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix debacle – and the teams couldn't agree on a solution. It's therefore highly disingenuous for the leaders of these teams to now heap ordure on the FIA for following its own procedures when, offered the opportunity to shape a new alternative, these individuals fell to their usual footling mutual bickering.

Is red-flagging races under these circumstances the right solution? After all, in Monza Max Verstappen had a new set of softs available (which he fitted under the Safety Car) while Charles Leclerc only had a used set. A restart would just have opened the door to more complaints and spurious cant.

GP Racing has a podcast!

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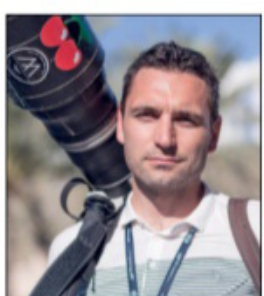
ANDREW BENSON

Andrew explains why talk of Lewis Hamilton's retirement is premature, and how Lewis and Mercedes are fighting to return to the top (p30)



OLEG KARPOV

A trip to Denmark for Oleg this month as he discovers why Kevin Magnussen chooses home over the bright lights of Monaco (p42)



DREW GIBSON

Once *F1 Racing*'s picture editor, now a renowned motorsport freelancer, Drew was on hand to record Mika Häkkinen's life in pictures (p56)



ANDREW FERRARO

Former staff snapper Andrew has spread his wings beyond action photography. See p42 for his shots from the land of the Vikings

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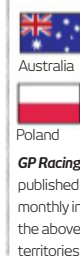
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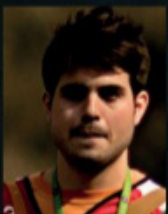
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Everything to
he who waits...

Kumhobocht is Zandvoort's penultimate corner and as fraught with peril as my attempts to pronounce its name properly. Drivers are looking to carry as much speed as possible through here so they can carry on building pace through the banked section which follows.

I had an inkling someone would go off here sooner or later so I got myself in position for qualifying, when the stakes would be highest. There was a bit of a delay in Q2 while some fools threw flares on the track. Come Q3, just as it seemed that my prediction was off, Sergio Pérez obligingly binned it just where I'd pre-focused my lens a few moments earlier.



Photographer
Zak Mauger

Where Zandvoort, Holland
When 4.04pm, Saturday
3 September 2022

Details Canon EOS-1D X MkII
600mm lens, 1/1600th @ F4



A symphony in scarlet

This is a classic Zandvoort angle, in some ways made more difficult because of the relative scarcity of holes in the fence these days, but improved by something you didn't always get in the past: huge and packed grandstands.

This is the exit of the banked Turn 3, named after former circuit director Hans Hugenholtz, which fires cars over the crest at Hunserug (named after a motorcyclist, I'm told). There's two lines here and Charles Leclerc, who was on a cool-down lap, moved over for Carlos Sainz. It's nice and unusual to get the two Ferraris together and the wash of orange from the grandstand really adds to the graphic effect.



Photographer

Steven Tee

Where Zandvoort, Holland

When 12.56pm, Saturday
3 September 2022

Details Canon EOS-1D X MkII
70-200mm lens, 1/15th @ F29









Victory as the mist rolls in

Even before Verstappen mania set in, and orange flares became a vital accessory, Zandvoort occasionally had a fog problem. One minute the sun would be shining, the next the mist would start rolling in off the North Sea.

While Sunday afternoon at the Dutch GP didn't turn into a pea-souper, there was a definite touch of mist at the end, mingling with the orange smoke. Parc fermé also had an unusual arrangement, not the regular three cars in a row, so I opted for a wide-angle lens and deliberately underexposed this shot of Max celebrating his home victory to maximise the soft backlight created by the mist, leaving Max in silhouette.



Photographer
Zak Mauger

Where Zandvoort, Holland

When 4.43pm, Sunday
4 September 2022

Details Canon EOS-1D X MkII
16-35mm lens, 1/2000th @ F4





Desperate Dan digs a hole

I was up at the top of the circuit shooting with some track hoardings in the background for a client when I noticed that when drivers were really going for a laptime they pushed especially hard right at this spot. Naturally something was bound to happen in qualifying so I positioned myself there again.

An Alpine and a Mercedes were the first to stray over the boundaries of the kerb and dip a wheel into the gravel, but then Daniel Ricciardo came through even hotter and wider. The result was sparks from the underfloor and a load of dust as well as gravel. Obviously he's pushing to impress potential employers but I'm not sure his mechanics were happy...



Photographer
Sam Bloxham

Where Spa, Belgium

When 4.42pm, Saturday
27 August 2022

Details Canon EOS-1D X MkII
200-400mm lens, 1/1250th @ F5.6

Verstappen turns the world orange

Not since the 1970s have orange flares been such an essential accessory. Max Verstappen's army of fans always bring an atmosphere, especially here at his home circuit. While there are those who harrumph at the frequently wild behaviour, it's actually quite pleasant to see people enjoying themselves after the circumstances of the past couple of years.

While the flares were a big talking point, causing disruption at times, I knew the fans would let rip if Max won. So I positioned myself near a packed grandstand at the end of the race in the hope that they would go wild on his cool-down lap. They didn't disappoint.



Photographer
Al Staley

Where Zandvoort, Holland

When 4.40pm, Sunday
4 September 2022

Details Canon EOS-1D X MkII
135mm lens, 1/2000th @ F5





HOW THE RED BULL-PORSCHE DEAL COLLAPSED

01 The long-awaited Porsche-Red Bull partnership, which was agreed in March and originally planned to be announced in early July, has collapsed – largely, *GP Racing* understands, because the delay to Formula 1's new engine rules left both parties with too much time on their hands.

Porsche's plans to return to F1 in an alliance with Red Bull were known since the beginning of spring. Over the course of six months, more details leaked regarding the shape of the partnership, which was to begin officially in 2026 when the new power unit regulations come into force. Porsche was not just going to supply Red Bull with engines, but also intended to be a fully fledged partner of the Austrian company, by buying 50% of its Formula 1 operations.

The only thing missing was an official announcement. Its absence was initially explained by the delay in finalising the details of the new regulations. Having given Porsche and Audi the go-ahead to start their F1 programmes, the VW Group nonetheless didn't want to confirm anything definitively until after the rules were signed off. But this was seen as merely a formality.

In the end, the process dragged on too long. The text of the new regulations was supposed to completely satisfy the VW Group, but this was only approved in mid-August. Paddock insiders say the delay in the official announcement from the FIA led to an unexpected rift between Porsche and Red Bull: both parties simply had too much time to discuss details of their future operation. The longer negotiations proceeded, the clearer it became that the views of the bosses of the two companies diverged on a number of important points.

Evidently, Porsche wanted to secure more control over the team than Red Bull was willing to give. Team principal Christian Horner has emerged as one of the main opponents of the partnership. And while he rejected some of the more hysterical claims in the media that he scuppered the deal to protect his own position of power and influence within the company, he repeatedly stressed that it made no sense for Red Bull to alter the way it runs its race operations.

"We are an independent team," he said during the Dutch Grand Prix weekend – before it was revealed that negotiations with Porsche had ended. "That's always the way that we've operated in terms of being flexible and the ability to move quickly and efficiently. And I think that's part of the DNA of what Red Bull is."

To put it simply, the bosses of Red Bull, which



PICTURES: MARK SUTTON; AUDI

Christian Horner (above) isn't duly concerned about the end of negotiations with Porsche. Audi, meanwhile, has confirmed its initial entry into F1 as an engine manufacturer

confidently leads both the drivers' and the constructors' championship, did not see the need to bring on board any additional advisers from the car manufacturer. Horner has a point: F1's recent history is garlanded with examples of large corporations getting involved and failing because they lack agility and racing nous. Red Bull's former incarnation as Jaguar was a powerful example of a car manufacturer lacking the streetfighting skills to succeed in F1 – and it was Horner who had to transform the mess that was left.

The delay in rubber-stamping the new rules also meant Red Bull was able to complete the first dyno tests of its new prototype engine for 2026 at its powertrains plant in Milton Keynes, in which the Austrian company has invested

**EVIDENTLY,
PORSCHE WANTED
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heavily since Honda announced its departure from Formula 1. These tests were understood to have been successful enough to form another argument in favour of independence: Red Bull has confidence it can produce a competitive power unit without any assistance.

According to sources familiar with the situation, the deal between Red Bull and Porsche was supposed to be announced at the Austrian Grand Prix in early July, but the delay in agreeing the regulations meant the press release remained in the draft folder. The following weeks were decisive. Red Bull's position changed because it no longer felt the need for an equal partnership. Porsche, for its part, wanted to be more than just a nominal engine supplier. Simply putting

its branding on a Red Bull-built engine wasn't an attractive enough option, and carried potential image risks if the power unit turned out to be uncompetitive.

In early September, Porsche officially announced the termination of negotiations with Red Bull.

"In the course of the last few months, Porsche AG and Red Bull GmbH have held talks on the possibility of Porsche's entry into Formula 1," the company statement read. "The two companies have now jointly come to the conclusion that these talks will no longer be continued."

"The premise was always that a partnership would be based on an equal footing, which would include not only an engine partnership but also the team. This could not be achieved."

It is still possible that after failing to secure a deal with Red Bull, Porsche will try to find another partner in F1. But the probability of this is understood to be low.

Red Bull may try to find a new partner as well, but the role of such a partner would extend no further than naming rights of the power unit built in Milton Keynes. Horner is adamant Red Bull doesn't need outside help to produce an engine as good as Mercedes, Ferrari or Renault.

"No worries about that," he said. "We're in a position with recruitment and investment within the facility to do all aspects of the power unit."

"What we were interested in, when you're building a power unit entity from scratch with an OEM [car manufacturer], is what can they potentially bring to the party that we didn't have access to? And I think, having done our due diligence, we felt that actually we were in good shape. And with the recruitment that we've made, technically, we don't feel at any real disadvantage to our competitors."

While the prospect of Porsche returning to F1 has dwindled, the world championship will be welcoming a new manufacturer in 2026. Unlike their VW Group colleagues, ►

Audi executives have worked with great stealth, and announced their plans to join F1 a couple of weeks after the FIA approved new regulations.

Audi revealed some but not all of its plans during a press conference at Spa. It confirmed it was working on an engine but would not reveal which teams it may supply. But it is no secret that Audi is edging closer to agreeing a deal with Sauber. The German manufacturer intends to buy a controlling stake in the team, which currently competes in F1 under the Alfa Romeo moniker.

It is believed details of the new agreement will be revealed as early as the Singapore Grand Prix weekend.

ALPINE HUMBLLED IN PIASTRI FIGHT

02 McLaren may be struggling to hit its targets on track this year, but behind the scenes the Woking-based team has won a significant off-track battle. It has signed Oscar Piastri for 2023, whistling one of the hottest young talents on the market from under Alpine's nose.

The young Australian, who won three prestigious junior championships between 2019 and 2021, will replace his compatriot Daniel Ricciardo at McLaren next year.

To get the deal with Piastri over the line, McLaren bosses Zak Brown and Andreas Seidl had to overcome several obstacles – including the early termination of Ricciardo's contract. Daniel joined McLaren at the beginning of 2021 on a three-year deal, but did not live up to expectations despite the memorable victory at Monza last season. Another potential threat for McLaren was that it had to wait for the decision of F1's contract recognition board, since Alpine also laid claim to Piastri's services.

On the face of it, Alpine's claim was a strong one.

The battle between McLaren and Alpine for the services of Oscar Piastri (above) has been settled in McLaren's favour



But it wasn't backed up in contractual detail. Piastri had been on Alpine's books for over two years, having joined what was then known as the Renault Sport Academy at the beginning of 2020. His rapid progress through the junior ranks created the problem: he won the F2 championship in 2021, a year earlier than expected, but Alpine couldn't offer him a race seat for 2022 because Fernando Alonso and Esteban Ocon were under contract. Instead Alpine arranged an extensive test programme for Piastri to prepare him for a potential F1 debut in 2023 but, by spring, Alpine had gravitated towards keeping its line-up for another year and loaning Piastri out to Williams.

All that changed at the end of July, as Alonso surprised everyone (including his Alpine bosses) with a switch to Aston Martin. Having received no satisfactory offer from his current team, Fernando agreed to fill the vacancy created by Sebastian Vettel's decision to retire. Alpine then promptly announced Piastri as its race driver for 2023 – only for him to publicly deny he'd drive for the team. By that time Oscar had already signed a contract with McLaren.

The saga has been disastrous for Alpine, which has allowed two talented drivers slip from its grasp. Team boss Otmar Szafnauer publicly declared Piastri had "signed something" with his team in November 2021, and that the ►

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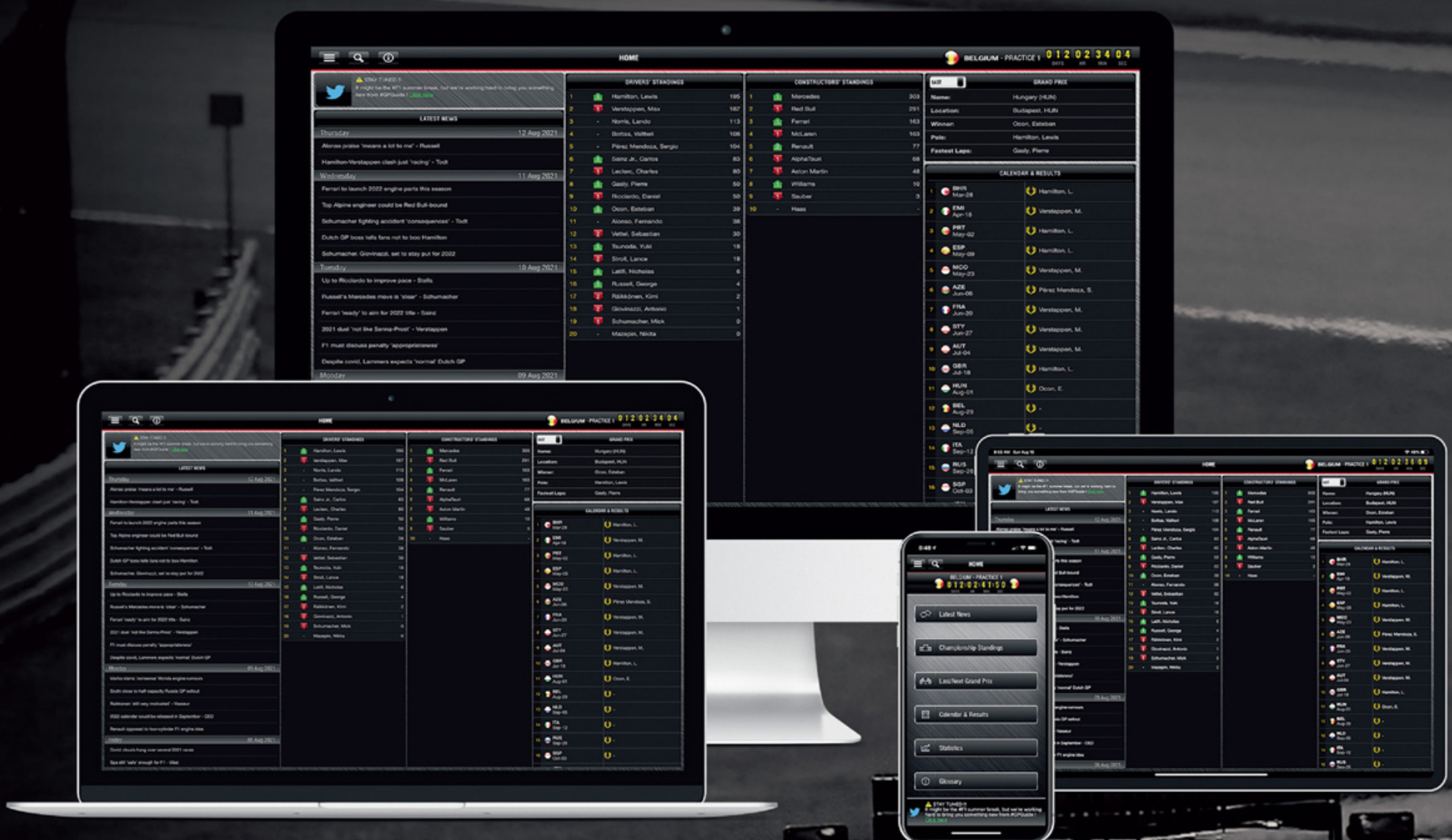
WILL A HOME WIN CAP ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR SERGIO PÉREZ AT RED BULL?

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team was going to pursue its interests. The case was presented to the contract recognition board, which decided the something Piastri had supposedly signed was more of a nothing.

Naturally the CRB report was leaked, and it exposed the shortcomings of Alpine's arrangement with Piastri: having outlined the plan to prepare Piastri for F1 in what is known as a 'terms sheet' last November, the team failed to finalise a proper formal agreement with its protégé. Alpine lodged the terms sheet with the CRB in March but negotiations with Piastri and his manager Mark Webber became muddled thereafter; by May Alpine's offer had shifted to a four-year contract from 2023 to 2026, but with at least the first season to be with Williams. At this point Piastri and Webber began to look elsewhere. The CRB, which determined that the terms sheet did not amount to a definitive contract, decried what it described as Alpine's "shilly shallying".

The CRB decision did not present McLaren bosses in the best light either, since it revealed the exact date the deal between the team and Piastri was signed: 4 July, the Monday after the British Grand Prix. Ricciardo fans accused Brown and Seidl of having negotiated behind Daniel's back, given the Australian himself had put out an emotional statement reaffirming his future with McLaren on his social media channels on 13 July, more than a week after the team signed a deal with his future replacement.

Public sentiment, though, is not the CRB's bailiwick and it found definitively in favour of McLaren – to the extent that it ordered Alpine to pay costs.

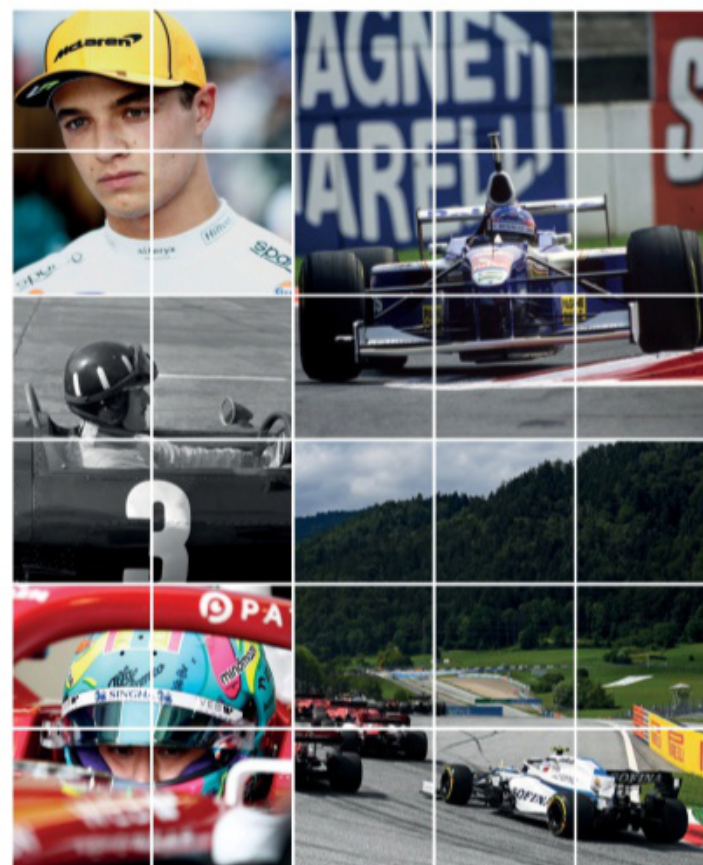
The day after the CRB announcement Szafranauer (left) and Seidl bumped into each other entering the Zandvoort paddock. One of them would have been much the happier...

NATURALLY THE CRB REPORT WAS LEAKED, AND IT EXPOSED THE SHORTCOMINGS OF ALPINE'S ARRANGEMENT WITH PIASTRI

F1 MASTERMIND

Your chosen specialised subject: the world's greatest motorsport

- Q1** In 2020 Nicholas Latifi started his first-ever GP in 20th but where did he finish?
- Q2** Who was the last Italian to score a world championship point driving a Ferrari?
- Q3** Which three drivers claimed March's three world championship victories?
- Q4** When Michael Schumacher and Sebastian Vettel won 13 races in 2004 and 2013 respectively, which other driver won a race in both seasons?
- Q5** Of BRM's 17 world championship F1 victories how were by claimed by Graham Hill : 5, 8 or 10?
- Q6** Who am I? I started 114 GPs from 1977 to 1986 for Ensign, McLaren, Theodore, Ligier, Ferrari, Renault and Lola, winning twice and claiming five poles.
- Q7** True or false: Jacques Villeneuve never finished on the podium at the Italian GP?
- Q8** Lando Norris led two races in 2021, the Russian GP and which other race?
- Q9** Three European circuits featured in the 1992 world championship but are not included in this year's calendar. Which are they?
- Q10** Zhou Guanyu has so far this season started three races from 10th or better? Which three are they?



1 11th 2 Nicola Larini (San Marino 1994) 3 Jackie Stewart, Vittorio Brambilla, Ronnie Peterson 4 Kimi Räikkönen 5 10 6 Patrick Tambay 7 True, 8 Italian GP 9 Magny-Cours, Hockenheim, Estoril 10 Canadian, British and Italian GPs



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PICTURES 

HAMILTON'S SINGAPORE SIGNIFICANCE

Ten years ago, the atmosphere in the paddock in Singapore was electric as Lewis Hamilton's plans for the future sparked the Formula 1 media pack. I was part of the BBC's broadcasting team at that time and had heard the news direct from our pundit Eddie Jordan, a prediction he'd made at the previous race at Monza and which was confirmed a couple of days after Singapore: Lewis was leaving McLaren for Mercedes.

While Hamilton was keeping quiet about his discussions with a new team, his style on the night-time street track was as accomplished as ever. He took pole position and was leading the race for McLaren when a gearbox failure sapped his chances for the title, dropping him from second to fourth in the points. It was a significant Singapore outing (Niki Lauda later claimed it was the gearbox issue which tipped Lewis's choice in favour of Mercedes), but there were more to come.

A key moment came several years later, and it related closely to the original contract discussions in 2012. Hamilton has always had other interests,

passions outside F1 which have helped him develop a way of living that has suited his style. As he arrived in Singapore in 2018, he was leading the championship by 30 points but had also spent ten days since Monza immersed in another sphere.

It was the first year his association with international fashion star Tommy Hilfiger had led to a joint collection which was promoted and celebrated initially in Shanghai and then in New York. Off the back of those travels and commitments he was back behind the wheel at the unforgiving Marina Bay street circuit – and on the Saturday he delivered one of his most personally significant pole positions. He smashed the previous year's pole time by three seconds and leapt to a level way beyond the team's ideal-lap computer predictions. Despite widespread criticism of his so-called off-track 'distractions', he shone more brightly than ever; and he knew this meant a lot.

In a recent interview with *Vanity Fair* magazine, Lewis described how in 2012 he had set out to Mercedes his fundamental need to have the freedom of living life to the full: "This is who I am. These are the things I like to do" he explained to the team. Six years later he continued to prove it by immersing himself in fashion and style then delivering on track. "And I did the best lap I'd ever put together," he confirmed.

The Mercedes team was stunned by his lap. Technical director at that time James Allison said it was a breathtaking performance and team boss Toto Wolff called it surreal. That lap has remained

embedded in Hamilton as truly significant, and proof that living his life to the full allows him to deliver his best.

Other champions may have had different approaches, yet their clarity of thought and understanding of what they need to make everything work has frequently come from an early time in their lives.

Both Lewis and fellow multiple world champion (and knight of the realm) Jackie Stewart had to deal with dyslexia at school and suffered as a result. "Teachers were telling me 'You're never going to be nothing,'" recalls Lewis. Jackie suffered similarly in the 1950s.

"Everyone was saying I was dumb, stupid and thick," wrote Jackie in his autobiography *Winning is Not Enough*. "The teachers said so, and other children said so in the playground – and in the absence of any other explanation, I started to feel they must be right"

They both also experienced not just verbal but physical abuse. Jackie's loss of confidence left him spending time in some bleaker parts of his community. One day at the age of 14 he was attacked by a bunch of youngsters.

"The attack was brutal and brief and not more than a minute later, I was left lying on the pavement a few yards away from my bus stop with a fractured collarbone, three cracked ribs and a broken nose."

For Lewis, the additional effect of racism struck him at the younger age of 11 when a walk to the shops in Newcastle ended in him being beaten up by a father and son who were shouting "Go back to your country".

For both Lewis and Jackie, difficult times during their childhood and teenage years were balanced and sometimes obliterated by achievements elsewhere. Lewis was winning with remote-controlled cars and then karts from an early age, while Jackie discovered he had a talent for clay pigeon shooting when he was 13. Both were able to achieve things others were unable to match, and they found a path to lift themselves to a higher level, especially behind the wheel of an F1 car. As Jackie said, "Dealing with these problems made me very much more determined than I might otherwise have been."

For Lewis, becoming one of F1's all-time record breakers has allowed him to open up and be proud of what he has achieved, as well as continuing at an incredible level both on track and in different aspects of his life, such as increasing diversity and awareness while also enjoying his own personal passions.

While Hamilton hasn't been in the fight for the title this season, it has reinforced his dedication to F1. Whether he can repeat that lap of 2018 and the subsequent victory in Singapore is an open question. But his efforts will be as intense and heartfelt as ever.



Lewis and Jackie Stewart drew strength from childhood adversity



The Singapore 2018 victory quelled talk about Lewis's so-called 'distractions'



Lewis celebrates pole in Singapore in 2018, after *that* famous lap, when he went three seconds faster than the 2017 pole



Promotion of his work with Tommy Hilfiger in 2018 didn't please some F1 traditionalists



Gearbox failure in the 2012 Singapore GP was a turning point for Hamilton at McLaren



Singapore 2012 and F1's media pack is all over Hamilton regarding his future plans



UNDER THE HOOD

PAT SYMONDS

PICTURES  **motorsport** IMAGES

setup changes allowed once qualifying starts and just the Pirelli wet and intermediate tyre available, life is more simple but that isn't to say it's by any means easy.

The secret now, as indeed it always was, is to have good knowledge of what the rain is going to do. If intensity is increasing then times need to be set early in the session; if intensity is decreasing later times will be faster. Most importantly one needs to be on track when conditions are most favourable – and ideally with the car in the best state of fuel load and tyre condition and temperature that you can manage. It sounds obvious but can be very difficult to achieve.

In order to make this decision teams employ sophisticated

weather radar which can track rainfall.

The first to do this was Benetton in the late 1990s, but now all teams have access to a single source provided by Météo France and administered by the FIA. We often see the radar image on our TV screens when the weather is threatening. This system allows teams to predict the precise time rain will hit the circuit and even which corner will be affected first. This can be vital to providing the data from which decisions are made but, in F1, our needs are very different from a typical weather forecast: we need to know whether it will rain, at exactly what time, what the temperature will be and the windspeed and direction – all within the very precise area of a few kilometres and within a timeframe of approximately 90 minutes. To do this we need very accurate weather predictions, hence the reliance on a specialised service dedicated to providing just this information.

But it's not just rain which makes up weather. Wind too has a huge effect on cars that rely so heavily on aerodynamics for performance. Basic physics tells us that, for a given aerodynamic configuration, the downforce produced is a function of the square of the speed. If the car travels twice as fast through the air then the downforce is four times as much. If we consider the recent race at Spa, during qualifying, there was a 9km/h tailwind into Turn 5 (Les Combes) and the quickest cars were approaching this corner at 340km/h, meaning they were losing around 5% of their downforce compared with if there had

WEATHER: IT'S NOT ALWAYS A GREAT LEVELLER

The European summer of 2022 will be remembered for record-breaking temperatures and the lowest rainfall seen for many years. In spite of this, seven sessions up to the mid-season break required wet or intermediate tyres: the events in Imola, Monaco, Montréal and Budapest were all affected at some point by wet weather.

Experience can give some indications of what weather to expect and, for new circuits, teams will scrutinise the 30-year averages for the particular location at the time of year of the race in order to ensure the correct cooling packages are available for the cars. They are, however, only averages and extremes can still catch you out. Even Bahrain, the driest country we visit, has 10 days of rain a year and although we have only ever had a dry race there it has rained heavily in March.

It's often said that the weather is the same for everyone and even that it is some form of 'leveller' of performance – but is that really true? Certainly wet weather provides a very visible set of different conditions but so too do other



Although it has been a warm and dry summer in Europe, wet weather tyres have been seen in a number of sessions during the first half of the season

environmental factors such as wind, temperature, and even to some extent atmospheric pressure. Having a good handle on what weather to expect and having the tools and knowledge to handle different conditions, far from being a leveller of performance, can hand those with the correct skills a worthwhile incremental advantage.

Let's consider wet weather first. There was a time when different tyre manufacturers were competing against each other and cars could have their setup configuration changed at any point during the weekend. Then wet weather was a huge decision-making challenge. These days, with no



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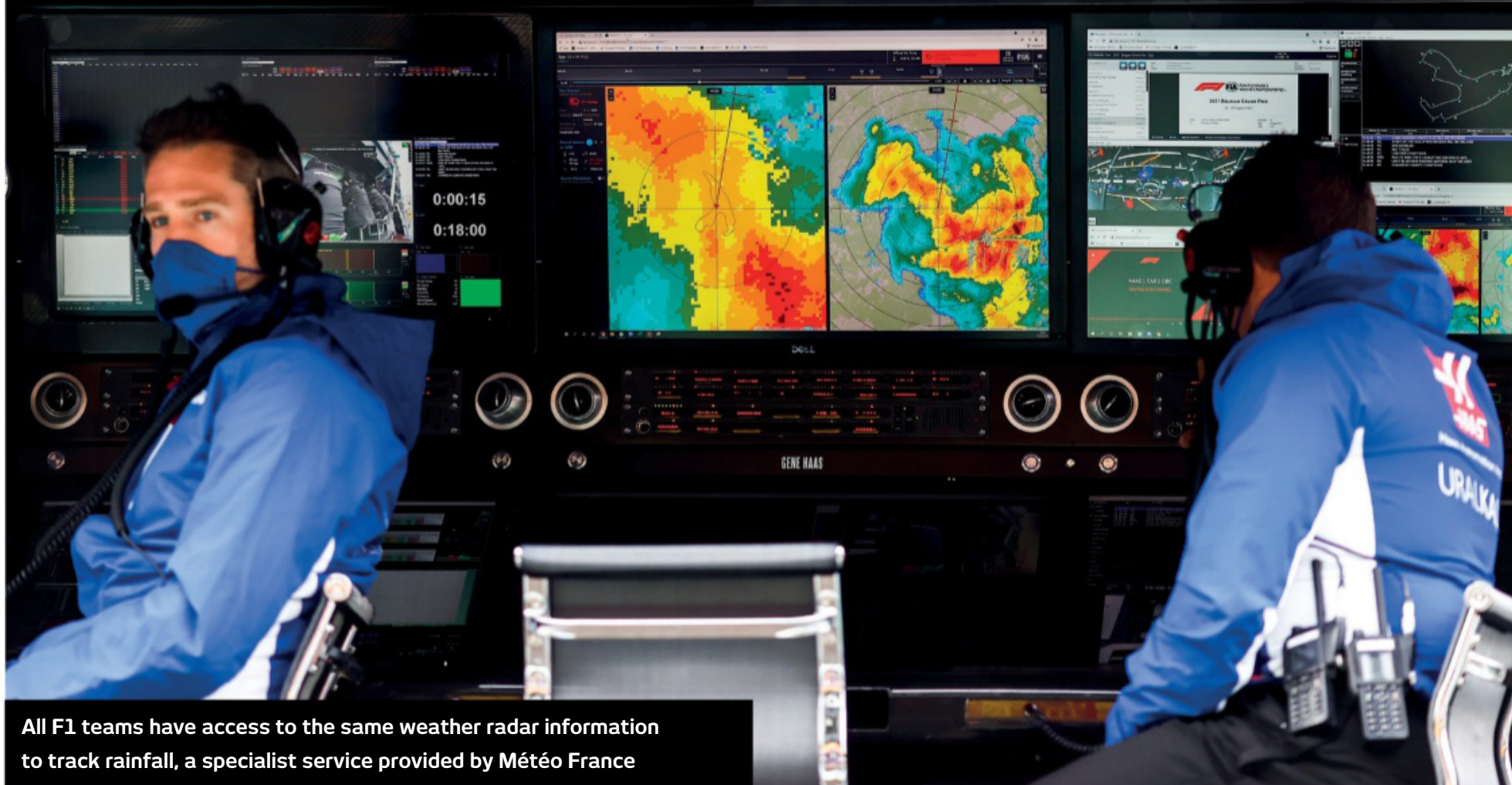
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Aerodynamic performance and top speeds for cars as they approach Les Combes at Spa can be affected by the direction of any wind



All F1 teams have access to the same weather radar information to track rainfall, a specialist service provided by Météo France

been no wind. Conversely, had that been a headwind, while they may not have achieved the same top speed, they would have had a similar magnitude of increase of downforce when they started braking. Now, with straightforward headwinds or tailwinds the percentage of downforce change will effectively be the same for all cars but, if it's a crosswind, then it's definitely not the same for all. All cars lose downforce in a crosswind due to what's called yaw sensitivity. Typically a car may lose a similar 5% of downforce when it experiences the wind approaching at an apparent angle of 5°.

This is the yaw angle, and it can arise from both the car experiencing some yaw in a corner or a component of crosswind combining with the forward speed of the car to make the wind appear to be hitting the car at an angle. For example, at 150km/h, a crosswind of around 13km/h will appear to the car as if it were

approaching at around 5°. One often hears drivers complaining of cars being less competitive in windy conditions. This is due to their cars having greater yaw sensitivity to that of their competitors.

Finally there is temperature itself. This has two effects. Firstly, additional engine cooling required for high temperatures will always lead to a loss of downforce. The better the aerodynamics, the less the loss and the more competitive the

IF A CAR STRUGGLES TO GET ITS TYRES UP TO TEMPERATURE THEN A COLD TRACK WILL AFFECT IT MORE THAN ONE WHICH HEATS THE RUBBER EASILY

car. Secondly, tyre temperatures are key to performance. If a car struggles to get its tyres up to temperature then a cold track will affect it more than one which heats the rubber easily.

So far from weather being a great leveller of performance the converse is true. Depending on the actual atmospheric conditions a team may have a good or a bad day; such are the fine margins between success and failure in F1.



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STRAIGHT TALK

MARK GALLAGHER

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Instead the new engines caused confusion and disappointment thanks to their muted sound. Indeed, it was only at the end of last year F1 got around to launching a marketing campaign promoting the efficiency of the current engines.

“The world’s most efficient engine, powered by Hybrid” declared the new logo, before adding “since 2014”, just to remind us.

The 2026 engine rules have undoubtedly benefitted from lessons learned. As is typical of the new collegiate style of management, all stakeholders were involved – the FIA, F1, the teams and manufacturers old and new, VW Group included.

They considered not only the road-relevancy of the hybrid technology but also the way in which it could best be communicated. Keeping 1000bhp is good news for race fans, producing it from a synthetic drop-in fuel which adds nothing to the stock of Co2 in the upper atmosphere is great for everyone. Sponsors will love it, even the oil companies.

While environmental sustainability is highlighted in the new rules, the case for commercial sustainability shows F1 is firmly wedded to the way in which car manufacturers spend money. It’s not cheap.

There is an engine cost cap, fixed at \$95m for 2022-2025, rising to \$130m per year from 2026 onwards. You read that right, the engine budget cap is not far off the budget cap for designing and operating the cars and the race team.

With around \$260m of total ‘cost cap’ to play with each season, plus all the excluded costs including driver salaries, it’s not difficult to see

\$400-500m being run through the books by the largest manufacturer outfits.

Perhaps the biggest concern is whether anything can prevent 2014’s most painful lesson from being repeated. The intent was that no single manufacturer should gain a significant competitive advantage. The opposite happened: Mercedes’ talented team won the next eight constructors’ titles.

With at least six manufacturers entering the fray this time, the rulemakers must hope a repeat performance is unthinkable. Fingers crossed?

NO TO COMPLEX AND COSTLY ENGINE TECH

The 2026 engine regulations have finally been agreed. They make for interesting reading, both for what they do and do not include.

Gone is the innovative, complex and hugely expensive MGU-H spinning at 125,000rpm, a piece of technology which added very little to the show but got some of those sitting around the table in Place de la Concorde terribly excited. Road-irrelevant as it turned out.

Of far greater significance was the ability of the engine manufacturers to take the combustion efficiency of the fuel-flow-limited internal combustion engine (ICE) to an entirely new level: Mercedes reached 50% thermal efficiency five years ago.

It’s not the first time in F1 history a regulatory wrong turn has occurred, but I don’t suppose anyone will add up all the time, effort and money spent on MGU-H technology over the past decade.

Also gone are variable trumpets. Instead the MGU-K is where all the hybrid action is to be had; its output will be increased to 350kW, or 470bhp



Mercedes has been the king of the hybrid era, with eight constructors’ titles, but it is hoped the new regs won’t let one manufacturer dominate

in old money, albeit subject to limited deployment at certain speeds.

The 2014 regs were designed by technocrats with little concern for the wider business of F1, never mind its fans. Here were a set of rules about which the FIA was deeply passionate, yet the governing body’s fervour wasn’t shared across F1. The new rules weren’t refined or communicated properly to sponsors, media and fans.

“I’LL PROVE YOU WRONG AGAIN”

Lewis Hamilton’s words in a recent *Vanity Fair* interview define both his world-view and his approach to this season: one of perpetual struggle against adversity. As **Andrew Benson** explains, that’s what Lewis feeds off – and why, far from being down and nearly out, he’s using his unique skillset to spearhead Mercedes’ revival...

PICTURES  **motorsport**
IMAGES AND MERCEDES





Lewis Hamilton says coming back to Formula 1 this year – after losing a record eighth title in such controversial circumstances in Abu Dhabi last year, after setting out determined to avenge what he saw as an injustice and finding Mercedes had produced their worst car for a decade – has been “a tough wave of emotions”.

Most people in F1, whether they believe Max Verstappen or Hamilton were the rightful champion last year, accept that race director Michael Masi failed to implement the rules correctly during that fateful final Safety Car period. But hardly any believe it was deliberate.

For Hamilton, though, this was more than an injustice caused by a referee making a mistake. For him, it was manipulation, constructed to stop him winning the title.

To some, that will sound paranoid, even delusional. But Hamilton saw Abu Dhabi as the culmination of a series of obstacles put in his way – as he perceived it, the consistent failure of officials to hold Verstappen to account for his aggressive driving tactics; the unfair disqualification for what Mercedes insists was a legal rear wing, in Brazil. And then those final

five laps at Yas Marina.

“You see things start to unfold,” Hamilton told *Vanity Fair* in an interview this summer, reflecting on the climax to the season, “and my worst fears came alive. I was like, ‘There’s no way they’re going to cheat me out of this. There’s no way. That won’t happen. Surely not.’”

When he disappeared from view over last winter – to America, to wherever, to spend time with friends and family and “unplug, switch off” – he genuinely did not know whether he could summon the strength to return, whether it was even something he wanted to do. He had to rationalise what had happened, what he felt about it, and how to move forward.

Lewis is a man whose world-view is one of perpetual struggle. It’s what he feeds off, what motivates him.

It’s the mindset that leads to remarkable achievements – such as the fightback he mounted in the final part of last year which looked for so long like delivering him that title, and which included that remarkable race in Brazil, where he made up an effective 25-place grid penalty to score probably his greatest-ever win.

Perhaps, too, it is the place from which he drew the strength to come back, when for a time there was a genuine chance he would not.

“I took time to digest what happened, which is still difficult to fully understand everything, but to come back stronger,” he said at the beginning of the season. “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger, so I put my focus into training and getting healthy and enjoying the time off.

“The sport I loved, there was a moment when I lost a little bit of faith in the system. But I am generally a very determined person and I like to think to myself that while moments

Hamilton remains as focused as ever despite Mercedes having its least competitive season since before the start of the hybrid era





In a recent interview for the culture, fashion and current affairs monthly *Vanity Fair*, Hamilton reiterated his desire to continue in F1

like this might define careers, I refuse to let this define mine.”

The ambition was to right the perceived wrong – “if you think what you saw at the end of last year was my best, wait ’til you see this year,” he said. So to then discover that the Mercedes car in which he hoped to do that had a serious aerodynamic flaw was, to say the least, far from ideal.

His season started well enough with a podium in Bahrain, but after that things started to fall apart a little. By the fourth race in Imola, he was trailing new team-mate George Russell in the championship by quite a margin, and had been beaten by him in three of the grands prix.

To some, this was indication of the beginning of the end of Hamilton. Was he on the way out, they wondered? Had he lost his mojo, whether as a result of Abu Dhabi or just through the passage of time and the inevitable dimming effects of age?

As usual, though, people were not looking closely enough at what was happening. Yes, he

qualified badly in Saudi Arabia because of an ill-advised extreme setup choice hoping that it would turn his pig of a car into something better. And yes, he lined up behind Russell on the grid at Imola, too.

But having beaten George convincingly in Bahrain, Lewis would also have finished ahead in Australia, but for the timing of a Safety Car to give Russell a free stop and vault him ahead. The same thing happened in Miami two races later.

Imola was probably Hamilton’s worst weekend – qualifying behind Russell and then going nowhere in the sprint or the grand prix.

But qualifying wasn’t really qualifying at all for the Mercedes drivers. The team was in all sorts of trouble with tyre temperature. The laps that both men set in Q2 were not on the limit, they were tyre-preparation laps; Russell’s just happened to be slightly quicker than Hamilton’s. But in a fractured qualifying session, interrupted by a red flag and then rain, they never got to do a proper lap, and both were out in Q2.

In the sprint race, Russell finished where he started in 11th, while Hamilton dropped a place

at the start to 14th.

That meant that for the wet start of the grand prix, Russell was on the dry side of the grid and Hamilton the wet.

Inevitably, that meant Russell made a better start. And then, as Daniel Ricciardo collided with Carlos Sainz at the first corner, the track opened up for Russell, while it was blocked for Hamilton.

So Russell finished the race fourth and

LEWIS IS A MAN WHOSE WORLD-VIEW IS ONE OF PERPETUAL STRUGGLE. IT'S WHAT HE FEEDS OFF, WHAT MOTIVATES HIM

Hamilton, stuck in a DRS train, 13th.

It’s worth dwelling on Imola, the nadir of Hamilton’s season, because it was what led to all the questions about Hamilton’s future. What had happened to him, people thought, as they looked at the raw results? How had he done so badly?

In reality, yes, it was a bad day for Lewis, but it was the result of a combination of circumstances rather than any lack of performance.

So how have the Mercedes drivers compared this season? At the time of writing, after the Belgian Grand Prix, Hamilton had out-qualified Russell six times to four in races where it was ▶

possible to make a fair comparison, at an average advantage of 0.057 seconds.

In the races, Russell's consistency has been remarkable – he has failed to finish only once, and has never taken the flag in lower than fifth place. But it is Hamilton who has produced the best – strongest, fastest – three Mercedes race drives of the year, in Spain, Britain and Hungary. His consistent pace in races, and his ability to get the most out of the tyres, continues to set a gold standard.

None of this is to diminish the quality of Russell's season, or of him in general. Russell is already doing better against Hamilton than any previous team-mate since Fernando Alonso in 2007. That is a huge achievement, and it's a reflection of his potential as one of brightest stars of the new generation, and a world champion in waiting.

Russell is proving to be every bit as good as it looked he probably was over the previous three seasons, with highlights such as his starring performance on his one-off debut for Mercedes in Bahrain in 2020, or when he put the Williams – the second slowest car in F1 – second on the grid at a wet Spa last year.

Hamilton's relative 'struggles' early in the season, if that is the way one wants to describe it, are as much a reflection of the fact that he was next to a guy who is in the best car he has ever had for a season, is properly fired up, is extremely quick, and had a good winter and had nothing to overcome, as of any drop of performance by Hamilton. If, however briefly, there even was one.

There was always going to be a focus on Hamilton's performance against Russell – and vice versa – this season, but in some ways Mercedes' competitive predicament has removed the tension that might have been there.

When drivers are this good, and this ambitious, the sting is taken out of any rivalry when the car is not absolutely competitive, simply because the consequences are so much less significant when the world title is not on the line.

Mercedes' competitive struggles, therefore, have allowed the two to develop an effective collaboration and working relationship. Doing so would have been infinitely more complicated if they had a winning car.

The team is still struggling to get the 2022 car to the place it believes it can be. For every glimmer of light provided by a race such as Hungary – where Russell put his car on pole, and joined Hamilton in the team's first double podium of the year – there is a Spa, where a lack


of tyre temperature in cool conditions left Mercedes the best part of two seconds off the pace in qualifying.

The car started the year badly afflicted by 'porpoising', an aerodynamic disruption under the floor that leads to a violent, high-frequency vertical oscillation above a certain speed. That was pretty much tamed by an upgrade introduced in Spain, where a strong showing

gave the team a hope that turned out to be false.

At the next race in Monaco it discovered it had solved one problem only to run into another issue – 'bouncing', where the low ride-height of the car leads it to violently interact with any bumps on track. So bad was it in Azerbaijan that Hamilton struggled even to get out of the car at the end of the race.

A further upgrade in Silverstone moved the

A full-page photograph of Lewis Hamilton in his Mercedes racing suit, standing next to a large, stylized number 44. The suit is black with various sponsor logos including Petronas, IWC, AMD, and Ineos. Hamilton is looking towards the camera with a serious expression.

team forward again. But having lost the first three months of the season trying to solve a specific problem rather than improve the car, the main issue now is simply that Mercedes is behind on development.

Through this process, the team says, Hamilton's remarkable sensitivity to car behaviour has been critical to the Mercedes engineers. Not so much in him being able to

explain why the car was doing what it was, but in describing its on-track behaviour with sufficient detail and accuracy to enable them to understand exactly what it was doing. After all, it's harder to solve a problem if you don't know what it is.

These difficulties have taken Mercedes into unfamiliar territory. A team so focused on process and data has discovered that under the new rules these have not always applied.

"This season we have done unconventional things," team boss Toto Wolff says. "I remember having a chat with a very clever lady in aerodynamics, and she said: 'If you would have told me last year that we are putting a floor on the car that we haven't run in the windtunnel, I would have said we are never going to do this. And we did and everybody was proud of the results.'"

"This is a data-based sport but if you can't rely on the data because they don't correlate on the virtual world with what is happening on the track, you just have to try things and basically reverse-engineer correlation."

"The beginning of the year, was – not miserable, it could always be way worse – but from a driver's perspective, understanding this car was so confusing," Hamilton said at the

"NOW WE ARE IN POSITION WHERE WE UNDERSTAND THE CAR MORE, AND THAT HAS GIVEN US A MUCH MORE ENJOYABLE DRIVE"

French GP. "Now we are in a position where we understand the car more, and that has given us a much more enjoyable drive.

"We still lack performance in some of those areas but we are slowly getting there. It is about constantly chipping away.

"Unfortunately, we can't take big leaps at the moment, but who knows? Maybe one big leap will come and we will be right there." ►

Meanwhile, Hamilton’s off-track work, particularly his drive to increase diversity within the sport through his Mission 44 campaign, has provided a valuable way to reset in between races, and reminded him that he has important work to do beyond trying to return his team to competitiveness.

Unwelcome disruptions, such as when it emerged that triple world champion Nelson Piquet had used a racist term when referring to Hamilton in an interview last year, merely provide fuel for the fire. As did Jackie Stewart’s suggestion that perhaps it was time for Hamilton to retire.

Both these interventions came in the run-up to the British GP. Hamilton’s response was to call

“WHY DO WE GIVE THESE GUYS
A PLATFORM? THEY’RE NOT WITH
THE TIMES, THEY’RE CLEARLY
NOT WILLING TO CHANGE”

for media outlets to stop publicising such views.

“I’ve always tried to take the high road and I’ve always tried to be respectful to these individuals,” Hamilton said. “Why do we give these guys a platform? They’re not with the times, they’re clearly not willing to change.

“These undertones of discrimination and micro-aggressions in today’s world are just not helpful and just create more divide than not.



“I love how Michelle Obama says, ‘When they go low, we go high.’ So I try to continue to do that. I’m inspired by people like that. I’m still here. It’s not going to deter me from doing what I think is right and doing what I love, which is working in the sport.”

Hamilton still has another year to run on his current Mercedes contract. If he commits to another, from 2024 onwards, he will turn 39

shortly after starting it, and therefore presumably 40 before he finishes it, given the unlikelihood of him doing a single-year deal.

“I dunno if I wanna go to 40 but it’s not that far away,” he says. “I have a contract to the end of next year. I’m definitely still enjoying it.”

In his *Vanity Fair* interview, conducted around the time of the Spanish GP, he said: “I’d be lying if I said that I hadn’t thought about extending.

Baku (left) was definitely one of the lowest points in the season so far for Hamilton, when he struggled to get out of the Merc at the finish



I’m still on the mission, I’m still loving driving, I’m still being challenged by it. So I don’t really feel like I have to give it up anytime soon.”

And speaking to *BBC Sport* a couple of months later at Silverstone, he gave a similar impression.

“I’m still so committed,” he said. “I feel fitter than ever. I don’t feel the need to stop right now. I still have the ability and still a lot to do.

“It’s not just about winning. There’s a bigger picture. We are living in difficult times in the world. We all need positivity, hope, and I always wondered what my role here was. It can’t just be about winning.

“I’ve discovered it’s about people and how you give opportunities to under-served communities and create pathways into sport and hold people

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There have been bright spots for Lewis this year. Second in Hungary was one and the team is still pushing hard for a win in the remaining races



Hamilton with Formula 1 president Stefano Domenicali. Lewis is still in love with F1 and is happy with the way the category is progressing

accountable and that's what I'm about."

Some hear comments like this, look at his investment into the Denver Broncos NFL team, his dalliance with a group looking to buy Chelsea FC, or his forays into fashion and music, and wonder whether his focus is wandering from F1.

Hamilton's response to those sorts of questions is to point to the 2018 Singapore Grand Prix, when he was criticised for going to the Met Ball in New York and a fashion launch in Shanghai on his way to the race, and then produced the best qualifying lap of his life,

**"THERE'S STILL
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MANY RECORDS
BUT STILL A LOT OF
GROUND TO COVER
WITH THE TEAM"**

so good it left the Mercedes team open-mouthed in awe.

Preparing this piece, this writer reminded Hamilton of a comment one of his close friends, the fencer Miles Chamley-Watson, had made in the *Vanity Fair* piece, that he had nothing left to prove, but a lot left to accomplish.

How much of that, I asked, was in F1, and how did he view his future in the sport?

"There's still plenty to achieve here personally," he said. "Maybe not that many records as such, but still a lot of ground to cover with the team.

"I am still deeply in love with the sport and particularly like the direction and things that we're doing within the sport, the work that conversations that I get to have with Stefano [Domenicali, the F1 president].

"But of course, there's lots more outside that's continuing to grow as well. So it's exciting times. The future's bright, I like to think." 🏁

Andrew Benson is BBC Sport's chief F1 writer

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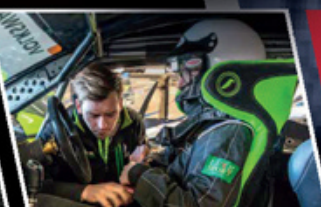


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FERNANDO ALONSO

He may be 41, but he's far from a has-been. Fernando is a hot enough property to have sprung one of the biggest surprises of this year's driver-market 'silly season', executing an unexpected (and ruthless) move to Aston Martin when he deemed Alpine's contractual offer not good enough...

Fernando, you've been at the centre of the Formula 1 news cycle over the summer break, so tell us – why Aston Martin next year?

Well, yeah, it was [me at the centre] for two or three days, then it changed, there was more news coming. But, yeah, I had this possibility, the phone call from Aston Martin after Sebastian [Vettel] announced that he was stopping at the end of the year. So at that point we sat down and we got to this agreement. I think the project is very attractive.

Obviously there is a lot of investment going on, a lot of new people came to the team, very talented engineers, designers, new facilities in Silverstone. So I felt it was a nice project for the future. They were extremely happy to join forces and have this possibility to grow up together. We felt it was the right thing to do.

Would you have been happy to stay with Alpine if that hadn't happened?

Yeah, that was my intention and I wasn't hiding that. Every press conference that I did so far this year, I was quite clear I was happy with the progress we're making as a team.

It has been an incredible journey for me to come back into Formula 1 with Alpine, which I consider my team, my family. We won so many things together and that will be part of our history, not only the Renault Group history, but also Fernando history, and I was happy with what we've done together.

But for one reason or another, we weren't moving forward and it seems it was a logical move to me, because Aston was very willing to have me and trust my abilities on the track and

off track as well, to develop the project. And, in my case also, it felt that after all the negotiations and the months, having the seat available for a younger driver and talented driver like Oscar [Piastrri], it was the right thing to do and a win-win situation for everybody.

Had Alpine offered you maybe a longer-term deal, do you think you would have signed the contract before the Aston Martin possibility became available?

You never know. It was not that specific talk about the future with them, and we were moving around in different things, and we maybe weren't agreeing on the principles. And it's not only what you agree in terms of the duration of the contract, it's also the trust you feel and how you feel wanted in a place. As I said, I felt it was the right decision to move to Aston because they seemed to really want me and appreciate every performance I was putting in over the past two years.

On paper, you're moving from a team which currently sits fourth in the constructors' championship to a team which is sitting ninth at

**THERE ARE SOME RISKS
ON EVERY DECISION YOU MAKE
IN FORMULA 1. NO ONE HAS
A CRYSTAL BALL**

the moment. So what are you expecting Aston Martin to do for next year?


Let's see. I think for sure there are some risks on every decision you make in Formula 1. No one has a crystal ball. In F1 or in any sport, you win or you don't. It doesn't matter to be fourth or ninth or 13th. You are first or you're not winning. And I think all the F1 teams and drivers, we're here to be in that top spot, and, yeah, I felt that within the possibilities I had on the table for next year, this one was the right one. And as I said, the project has some ingredients for the future that in F1 normally are synonymous with success: when you invest, and you have the best people. So let's see if we can shortcut that time as much as possible and make Aston Martin very fast next year already.

There is this picture with you, Felipe Massa and a 10-year-old Lance Stroll during your Ferrari days. Lance said recently that when that picture was taken he told you he would be your team-mate one day, but you didn't take him seriously back then.

Ha ha – true! But I think we were talking about Ferrari [where Lance was an Academy driver] and I said 'I'm not sure how long I will be in the team,' and then also, 'You're 10 years old, so let's see if we will meet one day in Ferrari.' At that time maybe I wasn't thinking to stay in F1 for that long.

So I'm very happy to share a team with him. Obviously now we've known each other for more than 12 or 13 years, and Lawrence as well. And yeah, I think he's very talented, there is potential. I'm looking forward to it.





'THE QUIET LIFE'

WORDS OLEG KARPOV

PICTURES ANDREW FERRARO

The unrelenting grasp of the tax man prompts most racing drivers to move to the likes of Monaco, Switzerland or Dubai. But **Kevin Magnussen** is quite happy where he is, thank you very much – at home, with his family, in Denmark

“ARE YOU MR MAGNUSSEN?”

Finally, after half an hour of walking along the harbour in Kevin Magnussen’s home city of Roskilde with *GP Racing* in tow, Denmark’s only current Formula 1 driver is stopped by a group of people wanting to pose for a picture. But they’re not local – French tourists here to visit sights such as Roskilde’s famous Viking Ship Museum and UNESCO-listed gothic cathedral rather than stalking one of the area’s most famous sporting sons.

‘Mr Magnussen’ confirms his identity and politely agrees to pose.

It would be easy to get the impression Kevin’s compatriots aren’t *that* interested in him, as if he’s simply another face on the street – the boy from next door perhaps – rather than Kevin Magnussen, F1 driver. Over the next



Kevin generally lives a low-profile life at home in Denmark but there’s always an exception...

couple of hours, as Kevin guides *GP Racing* around various parts of what is one of Denmark’s oldest cities, he isn’t intercepted in this manner again.

He’s definitely recognised, though. As we cross one of the harbour bridges, a guy in headphones shouts “*Hey, det er virkelig dig, mand.*” But he isn’t going for a selfie – a fist-bump with Kev is enough. Teenagers point out Kevin’s Porsche 911 to one another as we cross another one of the intersections in the city centre. Passers-by offer a look and a wide smile, but they simply walk on.

It’s a Scandinavian thing.

“They’re very chilled out here,” smiles Kevin, referring not just to the residents of Roskilde but to the entire nation of Denmark, a country where even their Queen can go shopping without being hassled.

Kevin has lived in Roskilde for most of his life, having grown up on the edge of the city whose population is just shy of 52,000. Like any kid from a working-class Roskilde family – except that his father Jan was an F1 driver.

“Formula 1 wasn’t as big as it is now,” says Kevin. “I think most people followed F1 in the years after, I would say – the Schumacher era. Of course, there was some attention there. But you know, when I speak to Mick [Schumacher] about the way he grew up, my childhood was totally different.

“If you see where I grew up... it was normal. Do you want to go there?”





It's agreed that we will, once we've completed our tour of the attractions of this fascinating city, which was the capital of Denmark for around 400 years until Copenhagen supplanted it in the 15th century. It acted as a hub for Viking sea power thanks to its position at the north end of Zealand, the large island which sits between the southern tip of Sweden and the main landmass of Denmark; to the east lies the Baltic Sea, to the west (via the Kattegat and the Skagerrak) is the North Sea, via which the Vikings sailed as far afield as North America and Constantinople.

"It's amazing to think that they just took off, you know, went north here," Magnussen points towards the Roskilde Fjord, which feeds into the Kattegat, "and then west and 'see what happens'. A couple of boys down [in the boat] and, 'Off we go!'

"I have a friend who stole one of the ships once, went sailing with it and



Aged 15 with father Jan at a sportscar race in America. It was around this time that Kevin's racing career almost came to a halt

brought it back," he laughs as we climb aboard one of the vessels.

Magnussen's closest friends are the ones he made here while growing up. "Very normal," he describes them. "They're carpenters, plumbers... I have a group of friends that go back, you know, some of them 25 years."

FROM RACING TO WELDING – AND BACK AGAIN

There was every chance of Kevin taking a normal job like those of his friends. His racing career almost stalled in 2008 and, at 15 years old, he spent three months learning to be a welder.

"My dad [a one-time McLaren and Stewart GP driver] ran out of money to pay for my karting," Magnussen recalls. "We had an opportunity to go and race in the Danish Formula Ford championship, but usually that doesn't take you anywhere. So, that looked like to be the end of my motorsport adventure. And then my uncle, he was a welder, just picked me up from home one day and was like, 'We need to get you a job, because you never know what's gonna happen with this racing thing.'" ▶

Kevin's dad wasn't in Formula 1 long enough to carve a niche or make serious money. Jan Magnussen spent two years as McLaren's test driver, making only one race start, then spent 18 months at Stewart before being dropped in favour of Max Verstappen's father Jos. While Jan went on to have a successful career in endurance racing, it wasn't lucrative enough to bankroll a single-seater career for his son.

"What you don't realise is a lot of drivers in F1 don't make a lot of money," says Kevin. "Some of them come with funding and get a big chunk of it as well. But there are also these drivers that get to F1 without money – and they don't get a big salary. They will be on, let's say, \$250,000 or half a million a year max. And then you've also got to live and pay tax and... you know, you also are a bit of a star, so you spend a lot of money suddenly. At least that was my dad's case."



Although he has spent time living elsewhere, Kevin explains to Oleg that his closest friends are those from his home city

"If you have to fund your son's racing adventures, you run out of money very easily. So that was the end of it: if he was earning less than what my season cost, that doesn't go. That's why I needed to get a job."

It was one of Denmark's richest men, motorsport enthusiast Karsten Ree, who then helped the Magnussens really get Kevin's single-seater career off the ground.

"I went to the welding factory," says Kevin. "I was there for three months. But I also did this Formula Ford championship and I won it, and my dad was racing in Danish Touring Cars and he also won his championship. And the owner of his team was pretty wealthy."

"After the season was finished, they had this dinner with the team at the track, in the tent, and my dad had to do the speech to thank the sponsors and the mechanics and all that, and I was asked to come up and talk about my season as well – we were the support race that weekend. And Karsten, the wealthy guy, was there too. So, I thanked everyone and I talked about my season, and then Karsten finished off to thank everyone as well. And at the end he just said: 'And by the way, I've decided to fund Kevin's career all the way to Formula 1.'"

"That was the first I heard of it! I didn't even know if anything was going on at all. And he just said it. I looked at my dad, I was like, 'What did he

say? He... He, what?' I was welding and I thought maybe it's the end. And then suddenly, boom, I had all the money I needed to go racing."

ROSKILDE: HOME OF DANISH MOTORSPORT?

Roskilde isn't just famous for Vikings and the annual music festival which has hosted acts as diverse as Bob Marley, David Bowie, Prince, Nirvana, Pet Shop Boys, Kanye West and Slipknot. It's also a Danish motorsport capital of sorts, and not just because both the Magnussens were born here.

Built in 1955, the 670-metre (later extended to just under a mile) Roskilde Ring looped around a former gravel pit close to the city centre, and a stone's throw away from Roskilde cathedral, the chosen burial site of Danish monarchs for the past 600 years.

"The track isn't there anymore, but they had Formula 3, Formula 2, sportscars, all this stuff," says Kevin of a venue which also hosted non-championship Formula 1 Danish Grands Prix between 1960 and 1962.

"Stirling Moss raced here and I talked to him about these races. I went to his home once, in Mayfair, and he was showing me all these scrapbooks of newspapers from all the places he'd raced at. And then he pulled out a book, this thick," Kevin spreads his thumb and index finger apart, "full of newspapers from Denmark, because he's been here so many times and did all these races. It was so cool."

"So there's a lot of racing history here. I guess, if there's one place in Denmark that is about racing, it's Roskilde."

Neither Kevin nor his dad got to race at the Roskilde Ring, since it was demolished in 1969, a victim of noise complaints from local residents. While the Magnussen family had prior involvement in the automotive world, Jan's generation was the first to break into motorsport.

"My granddad was a mechanic," says Kevin. "He was working at the local police station here, servicing the police cars. And he always had motorbikes around and stuff like that. Then my uncle started motocross, karting too when my dad was 10, and they did it together."

"So they were racing around Denmark and then – in their first race outside of Denmark – they decided, 'Let's go and try world championship' in Formula K or whatever formula it was back then. And then he [Jan] won, and became world champion."

A TALE OF TWO HIATUSES

Kevin has moved out of Denmark twice and returned twice – both times after losing his seat in Formula 1.

He first left Roskilde at the age of 17. The greetings card he'd received from McLaren boss Ron Dennis on his second birthday – as the son of Dennis's test driver at the time – helped Magnussen establish contact with McLaren and eventually join its junior programme, which led him to move to Woking in 2010.

Five years on, having made it to F1 but then been dropped (in favour of Fernando Alonso) after one season with McLaren, he returned to Roskilde.

In his book, which came out last year, Kevin describes that period as one of the lowest points of his life. He wasn't racing, for the first time in a long time, but was still attending grands prix as a reserve driver. ▶



Not far from the UNESCO-listed cathedral is the site of the Roskilde Ring, where Stirling Moss competed a number of times



Kevin outside the apartment in Roskilde where he lived with his mother, Britt Petersen, until his late teens

The disappointment of losing his drive hit him so bad that on grand prix evening weekends Kevin led a lifestyle hardly appropriate for an elite sportsman – in April of that year, after a night out at a Shanghai nightclub, he woke up in his hotel with his nose broken and no recollection of how it happened.

“I suffered a lot that year because I wanted to drive,” he recalls, “and, you know, I was still there watching these guys driving what I thought was my car. I felt terrible about that.

“I didn’t know if I was going to come back... I got promised some things and then it didn’t happen and I was left with nothing. I was super-depressed, stressed, I had no money and didn’t know what I was gonna do. That whole year was just shit.”

His second exit from F1 was a lot different. He’d re-entered via Renault, then in its first season after reacquiring ‘Team Enstone’. It was a heavily politicised environment, burdened by overly optimistic ambitions and a carry-over car which handled as if it had a hinge in the middle. Moving to Haas, Kevin found a team which suited his laid-back, apolitical style but, in 2019, matters came to a head as the team struggled with development and

Magnussen repeatedly clashed with team-mate Romain Grosjean on track. At the end of 2020 team boss Guenther Steiner opted for a total reset and got rid of both drivers.

“I just accepted it way better,” says Kevin. “Also I felt like I’d achieved something by just getting to F1.

“I actually did enjoy that year. And I also thought, ‘OK, I’ve had this many years in Formula 1 and I’m OK with it. I’m going to have a new plan, I can go and do some other racing, have fun doing Le Mans with my dad.’ I was looking forward to a lot of things and it wasn’t so sad at all. Also my wife was pregnant, so I was really looking forward to a nice time with a family, moving back to Denmark.

“Guenther is very honest. Good or bad, you know you can trust him. I’ll never forget that, when he told me that they didn’t have a seat for me after 2020, he was so open and honest about the whole situation. There was no bullshit. He just explained it.”

“[At other teams] It was always like saying one thing to you and then actually acting completely different. You know, in the Renault days they were saying, ‘No, no problems’ and everything, and I could just see other



Life in Roskilde is relaxing enough for Magnussen to walk around without being pestered non-stop for selfies or autographs



drivers' agents and dads were walking in and out of the team [hospitality]. It's like... 'Eh? I know what's going on here, so why don't you just tell me? So I can go and make other plans.'"

During Kevin's F1-less 2021 he raced in the US for Chip Ganassi in IMSA, had one IndyCar race and finally joined his dad to race together in the Le Mans 24 Hours. Having signed a factory endurance driver contract with Peugeot, he had his future secured. Then, at the end of February of this year, came the call from his old Haas F1 boss Guenther Steiner.

"Prior to the call [from Steiner] I had no idea I would be on the list for this seat. I knew the reasons behind why I lost the seat in the first place. But he just asked me and I said, 'Yes, of course.'"

The truth is he was ready to come back. Though he'd accepted his departure from F1, its lure was too strong. Racing elsewhere, even winning, wasn't quite so fulfilling.

"I really changed my views in the season I had out of Formula 1. I won races again when racing in the States and it didn't... you know, although I won, it still just wasn't F1. I didn't feel as ecstatic as I hoped. Just because it wasn't Formula 1."

BACK FOR GOOD

Kevin parks his Porsche next to one of the two-storey terraced houses on Knolden Street. It's the last stop of our Roskilde tour.

"It's always weird to go back..." he says as we walk towards the house where Kevin lived with his mother until his late teens. Jan was 18 and still racing in Formula Ford when Kevin was born. The relationship with Kevin's mother, Britt Petersen, didn't last.

"Here, in the bottom," Kevin points towards the door marked '65A' under a blue staircase. "It's one bedroom. My mom lived in the living room, so I had my own room. So, pretty normal, huh?"

Kevin is almost 30 now. His 911 has a baby seat. He may be back in Formula 1 but this time he's not interested in leaving Denmark. Financial matters might have prompted him to settle elsewhere in the past but he didn't like it; a year in Dubai was more than enough.

"It was shit," he says. "Too hot, but also just fake. All the culture that was there has gone. It's just the Brits and Russians going crazy, getting super drunk."


He lived in the UK with his wife Louise for much of his first Haas stint, but then they moved back to Denmark when they were expecting their daughter Laura. They live in Copenhagen now, still in an apartment, but one a bit bigger than this one on Knolden Street.

"I still have my own bedroom," laughs Kevin.

Financially, his F1 career has turned out more successful than his father's. And he's a much bigger star in his country, too – but with Denmark being Denmark he can still live a relatively normal life.

"There's a lot of reasons you would move away from Denmark," Kevin says. "It's high tax here, there's no secret. But I just really like Denmark, I feel at home here."

"And also, very, very importantly, I would like my daughter to have a more steady childhood, growing up in the same place, the same house. For her to have family around, go to the same school. If we'd lived in London, then my wife and kid would be alone, without any of our family there."

Just as the Vikings who sailed from this area set out as raiders but eventually became settlers, Kevin Magnussen has been involved in a few battles in his time – but he understands the value of home. 

IF THE BUDGET CAP DOESN'T FIT

Formula 1's budget cap was heralded as a radical advance, the saviour of smaller teams, and the pathway to a brighter commercial future for all. So why were so many teams so keen to either break it or negotiate a raise? As **Mark Gallagher** reveals, it's not just about the cost of crash repairs

PICTURES  **motorsport
IMAGES**
McLAREN, ALPINE AND
RED BULL CONTENT POOL





Each team will budget for the cost of repairs but the amount spent will differ from team to team

FOLLOWING THE INTRODUCTION OF

Formula 1's budget cap, the one thing which seemed inevitable was that its limits would soon be tested. Coping with factors inside F1 was one thing: financial allowances were made for the addition of sprint races and the ever-expanding nature of the calendar.

Turn to factors outside F1's control, and the shrinking nature of the global village and its impact on every facet of staging a world championship becomes evident. COVID-19 proved that. F1 ground to halt in spring 2020 and is still dealing with the pandemic's effects on global travel, supply chains and logistics.

As a result this year's budget cap, a ceiling of \$140m on each team's race car design, manufacturing and operations, was already at odds with a world of variation, fluctuation and unpredictability.

Yet nothing could have prepared F1 for president Vladimir Putin's decision to authorise Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February. The man who presented Lewis Hamilton with the winner's trophy at the inaugural Russian Grand Prix in Sochi, 2014, anticipated that a short, sharp 'special military operation' would overthrow the government in Kyiv in three days.

War – what is it good for?

It turns out that Putin could have done with a decent F1-style strategy room, because his hopes of a fast and easy victory have been thwarted by Ukraine and its allies. War in Europe has emerged. War of the old-fashioned bombers, rockets, tanks and soldiers-in-trenches variety, the kind which we thought was so last century.

The impact has been dramatic. The human cost, at the time of writing, is estimated at 34,000 troops killed on both sides along with 5718 civilian deaths, and a further 8199 injured. This is happening just 1500 miles from London. The political impact has been enormous too: Europe and its allies have imposed stringent sanctions on Russia. Finland and Sweden have applied for membership of NATO while Germany is set to re-arm in a manner not seen for 90 years.

War has also led to complete economic upheaval in Europe, a region which relied on Russia for 40% of its gas. Some countries, such as Lithuania and Finland, sourced 80% of their oil from across the border. Energy prices, surging in the wake of the pandemic, have leapt further as Europe has battled to source supplies from elsewhere – notably the Gulf, with a particular focus on Saudi Arabia's Aramco, sponsor of both Formula 1 and Aston Martin.

Crude oil, which hit \$12 a barrel at the start of the pandemic in April 2020, climbed to \$120 a

barrel in March of this year – a ten-fold increase. No one told oil markets about F1’s budget cap.

The impact of the war in Ukraine on F1 motor racing might appear immaterial, even irrelevant, yet the category employs 12,000 people. It drives the economies of the towns in which the teams are based, as any hairdresser, coffee shop owner or supermarket check-out assistant will tell you in Brackley, Woking or Milton Keynes.

F1 is a multi-billion-dollar business which has weathered the storms of the global pandemic only to be struck by war in Europe in the first year of the ‘new normal’. The Russian Grand Prix is gone, almost certainly for as long as Putin’s regime remains in power.

The budget cap, negotiated in happier times, was not designed for this.

Why the latest wrangle was inevitable

While the 2021 cap of \$145m went by without too much hand-wringing, the reduction to \$140m this year and \$135m for 2023 was always going to cause some complaints and finger-pointing. Teams always seek to push the sporting and technical regulations to their limits, yet shout loudly if they suspect a rival of overstepping the mark – and the same applies to the budget cap.

Every costly race accident or car upgrade prompts allegations that someone must be spending more than they should. The Cost Cap Administration, responsible for policing the budget cap, has strict controls in place.

EVERY COSTLY RACE ACCIDENT OR CAR UPGRADE PROMPTS ALLEGATIONS THAT SOMEONE MUST BE SPENDING MORE THAN THEY SHOULD

The filing deadlines, such as the interim report which teams must submit by 30 June or the full report which is due by 31 March, are themselves policed. When Williams missed the full reporting deadline in March this year it incurred a financial penalty of \$25,000 as a result of a ‘procedural breach.’

The types of breaches are detailed, together with the potential penalties, and this is something all team principals are very aware of. It rather focuses the mind. A ‘Minor Sporting Penalty’ for a breach could cause a team or its



F1 sits firmly behind Ukraine (above), but the subsequent increase in fuel and energy prices (right) has affected hitherto stable costs



drivers to lose points or face a race suspension, while the list of Major Sporting Penalties includes suspension or exclusion from the world championship. In this context, none of the teams can afford to take chances above and beyond ensuring that every dollar is spent wisely and recorded properly.

So why have so many of them hit the emergency alarm and suggested that they’re prepared to go over those boundaries? The downward glide-path of the budget cap and its fixed annual ceiling are firmly at odds with the increased costs teams are facing. Energy costs are

significant, particularly when teams have been increasingly switching to renewable energy, now in high demand. In the first three months of this year each kilowatt hour of electricity used by UK industry was 66% more costly than one year earlier. We were getting into the territory of teams having to switch their windtunnels off – McLaren, for one, spoke of “putting the handbrake” on car development.

Freight costs have also spiralled, something Christian Horner flagged in May when he told the BBC’s Andrew Benson, “Freight has quadrupled.

30% Payroll for designers and engineers (around 300 people and up to 500 from August to January when a new car is being designed)



That’s not something we can control.”

Indeed, control is the key word here. For those teams accustomed to spending more, hitting the budget cap requires predictability and discipline – and freight costs are fluctuating, a key component being the cost of aviation fuel which reached a peak in May and June, doubling in price in just one year.

In the UK, where eight of the 10 F1 teams have headquarters or technical facilities, producer inflation – the rate applied to manufacturing companies – is significant. By June this year the cost of inputs, including materials and fuel, had risen 24% year on year – the highest rate since input records began in 1985.

In Italy, home to Ferrari and AlphaTauri, the position was even worse: producer inflation is running at 34.6%. In Switzerland Alfa Romeo had a mere 6.9% to contend with, thanks in part

to 60% of the country’s electricity coming from its 650 hydro-electric power plants.

So far, so much analysis, but it provides the context behind Christian Horner’s much-publicised comment that, “Seven of the teams would probably need to miss the last four races to come within the cap this year. It’s not just about the big teams, it’s teams in the middle of the field who are really struggling with inflationary issues. Energy bills, costs of living, costs are going exponentially, and Formula 1 is not exempt.”

Although much of the response to this can be summarised as, “Well, he would say that, wouldn’t he?” there is no question that, against the inflationary pressures listed above, a non-negotiable budget cap suddenly appeared impractical. Particularly for those larger teams for whom the budget cap genuinely limits

expenditure – think Red Bull, Mercedes, Ferrari and McLaren.

Renegotiating the non-negotiable

Mercedes’ Toto Wolff, with 1700 employees to think about, points out that one of the reasons for considering an inflation-adjusted increase was to help staff who will inevitably want pay rises in order to meet the increased cost of living. In the UK average household energy costs have increased dramatically, up 12% in 2021, 54% by April 2022, and likely to rise a further 40%-50% this coming winter.

“It’s literally allowing people to have their salaries compensated for the extraordinary inflation they are suffering from,” said Wolff.

“I think the worst for the sport is having a stubborn position that some of the smaller

Estimated budget split for generic midfield F1 team

- ★ with a customer engine
- ★ with some parts not produced in-house
- ★ with approx 650-800 staff

20% Car build – raw materials (mainly composites) and buying parts, eg. suspension, gearbox

20% Payroll for production of car and associated equipment (around 150-200 people, with an extra 100 in the winter)

5% Payroll for race team (100-120 people, 60 at the track, rest factory based)

5% R&D - 5% (mainly running windtunnel)

7% Miscellaneous (crash budget, and other expenses)

8% Cost of going to race (freight)

Not included in budget cap, so will vary from team to team

- ★ drivers’ salaries
- ★ top 3 staff salaries
- ★ HR and finance
- ★ young driver programme, testing
- ★ heritage
- ★ marketing and PR
- ★ F1 race team travel (flights, accommodation)

teams think the big ones are trying to gain an advantage and we're actually going to screw them by not allowing them to do this, and us on the other side seeking to lift the ceiling, which we don't want to do.

"And I can tell you from my position as a team owner, I don't want to lift the ceiling just to have a cost cap ever increasing and basically outmanoeuvring the initial concept, but I want my people to be well paid especially in such tough circumstances."



The cost of using equipment back at the factory, such as autoclaves, has risen and looks set to continue to rise



Mick Schumacher's early-season shunt was an unwanted cost for Haas, but as a team with a smaller budget it was unlikely to be pushed over the cap

In April a meeting of the F1 Commission discussed a budget cap adjustment for inflation based on the International Monetary Fund's figures which, for consumers at the time, were 7.4% for the UK, 5.3% for Italy and 2.3% in Switzerland. Within two months those figures were 9.4%, 8.5% and 3.4%. Initially Alfa Romeo, Alpine, Haas and Williams voted against an adjustment. Their budgets are lower to start with, so the likelihood of bursting through the cap, even with inflationary pressures, was less of a concern.

Alpine's Otmar Szafnauer was clear his team had set a budget allowing for inflationary variances and was not inclined to grant the larger teams a budget cap increase. A man who spent many years juggling Force India's perilous financial position clearly knows a thing or two about managing finite budgets.

Another factor affecting budgets has been currency fluctuations. A topic one team's chief financial officer described to this author as "one of the dark arts of day-to-day financial management in the middle of an unprecedented

pandemic, an unpredictable war and a budget cap which looks great on paper but poses significant challenges in reality."

In short, the teams are paid prize monies and sponsorship in US dollars, and that's the currency applied to the budget cap. However the UK teams pay staff salaries and domestic suppliers in pounds sterling, Alfa Romeo Racing in Swiss francs, Ferrari and AlphaTauri in euros.

The FIA's budget cap rate – known as the Initial Applicable Rate – was based on \$1 being equal to £0.78 of December 2021. By July that

rate was £0.83, a small move you might think, until you realise that makes \$140m worth about £7m more for a team.

For the teams based in Italy, the situation has been even more significant as the euro has fallen dramatically against the dollar. In December a dollar would buy you €0.88, in mid-July the two currencies reached parity – every dollar would buy you one euro. These swings make it very difficult to plan a budget, and create inequality between the teams.

Taking the major shifts in inflation rates, the



Unloading at the Spanish GP. As early as May this year, there were concerns about the increasing cost of freight...



Some of the freight necessary for the Qatar GP in 2021. For flyaway races the cost of aviation fuel – which has doubled – increases freight costs even further

ongoing war in Ukraine, an global energy crisis and continued exchange rate fluctuations, July's F1 Commission announcement of a 3.1% increase in the budget appears modest, but it translates into \$4.9m. A further 3% will then be applied to next season's cap.

The FIA, Formula 1 and nine of the teams agreed. Only Alpine demurred, its management certain that any increase in budget cap allowance will only favour the larger teams given that they have the ability (in terms of infrastructure) to make full use of it.

No one was entirely a happy, a sure sign that compromise had been reached. The small teams wanted no increase at all, the larger teams a greater rise than was eventually agreed.

Ferrari's Mattia Binotto admits the agreement came just in time, but was sufficient to ease immediate fears.

"In terms of timing, we were borderline – some teams were already in breach of the budget cap for the year and at least to find a compromise was important," he says. "Thanks to the smallest teams because they have been comprehensive

and constructive. Certainly, as a big team you are always looking for more but this compromise is enough to give us a breath."

The matter has been addressed for now. What happens in the future depends greatly on factors outside Formula 1's control.

With a bleak European winter beckoning and the energy sector warning of shortages, F1 remains a passenger on a journey with an uncertain destination. In many respects what happens next is down to those sitting in the Kremlin, Kyiv, Brussels, London and Washington. 

MIKA HÄKKINEN

MY LIFE
IN PICTURES

At the turn of the century Formula 1 became the Mika 'n' Michael show as **Mika Häkkinen** claimed two world championships by going wheel-to-wheel with Michael Schumacher. Over a collection of images from his F1 career, Mika shares some cherished memories about his route to the top, annoying Ayrton Senna and Alain Prost, and *that* overtake in Spa...

INTERVIEW MAURICE HAMILTON

PORTRAITS DREW GIBSON

PICTURES  motorsport
IMAGES



Mika reacts to the images
and explains it all to Maurice
with liberal use of his hands...





MIKA'S FIRST FORMULA 1 TEST – WITH BENETTON

That was a super-interesting day. Winning a Formula 3 race in England gave me the opportunity to test the Benetton in 1990 on the Silverstone South Circuit. Inside my head I'm the best driver in the world, full of confidence. Everybody's saying: "Be careful. It's a Formula 1 car." I'm thinking: 'No way I'm careful!'

There's a long straight with a super-fast right-hander at the end of it. Behind that corner is the paddock they use for the South Circuit. There's just a barrier between you and the mechanics, who were watching. I did my installation lap and then I was coming down that straight, absolutely flat out; full power, because the car felt very good. I saw the mechanics starting to run away! They thought this crazy guy was going to crash into the paddock!

Lap after lap, my times were improving. I had one spin. This wasn't my mistake. I came into the pits and said there's something wrong in the car. And they said, "Yes, we know." They were very pleased because I'd recognised something was wrong. It was just a beautiful day – and very important for me. Peter Collins was the team manager and, when he took over Lotus for 1991, that's where I made my F1 debut.



INTO FORMULA 1 WITH LOTUS

My first grand prix [Phoenix, March 1991]. Halfway through the race, suddenly the steering wheel on my Lotus came off. Manual gearbox, of course, and quite a bumpy track, so I was sliding and hitting the barrier a little bit. I managed to get back to the pits for another wheel. The only spare steering wheel they had was for my team-mate, Julian Bailey, and his buttons were in a different place. I have big hands and, every time I went into left-handers, I was hitting the button for the drinks bottle: I was nearly drowning every lap!

Because it was my first GP, it felt like it was never going to end. The Lotus was very heavy – about 40kgs over the limit – and it felt like this GP was taking forever. I was really knackered. I looked in the mirror and thought: 'Because this race is so long, the sun's going down already. Incredible.' But the car was on fire! So, quite a dramatic first GP. ▶



FROM McLAREN TEST DRIVER TO RACER

I remember this very well [Portugal, September 1993]. This guy [pointing at Alain Prost's Williams], wasn't very happy! He was fighting for the championship and he was comfortably quicker. But I wasn't going to let him just accelerate away and take the lead. So I gave him a really tough time at the start.

We had a discussion about it afterwards and everything was fine. But not so good with Ayrton [Senna]! This was my first race with McLaren [Häkkinen having replaced Michael Andretti] and I outqualified Ayrton! That was big news because Ayrton was just so quick, particularly in qualifying. It was all in one corner where I was maybe one tenth of second quicker – so hardly anything at all.

Afterwards, he asked me: "Mika, how did you do this?" I stood up and told him it's because I had big balls. Ayrton got really upset. He didn't talk to me for a couple of weeks! I understood that. Ayrton had the latest [Ford] engine with the pneumatic valves or something, so he was able to use much higher RPM and I couldn't get near him in the race. But then his engine blew up. And I went off. But it was good fun.



FIRST TIME ON THE PODIUM

This was Japan in 1993. I was really confident with the McLaren: we had power brakes, active suspension, power steering. Everything should have been perfect. And yet I wasn't happy this weekend. I had a brake failure in free practice, so we couldn't get the car to an optimal level. That's why Ayrton kicked my arse in qualifying. There's always something, an excuse – racing drivers are good at this!

In the previous race I'd crashed. So it was very important for me to just do a good job and not do anything crazy. I was able to finish third and not only get on the podium for the first time, but also to be with two world champions [Senna and Prost]; that was a really big moment for me, a big confidence boost.

I felt there was a lot of respect. The three of us were very good together. Ayrton's holding my hand up. Yeah, that was nice.



A LIFE-THREATENING ACCIDENT

[During qualifying for the 1995 Australian GP in Adelaide, Mika suffered a left-rear puncture as he approached a 110mph fourth-gear right-hander. The McLaren was launched by a kerb before slamming sideways into a one-layer tyre barrier in front of a concrete wall. Such was the force of the impact, the seat belts stretched, Häkkinen hit his head on the steering wheel and cracked his skull. Had it not been for an emergency tracheotomy performed on the spot, he wouldn't have survived.]

It's good you chose this picture rather than the accident. It's important to me because the entire team really took great care of me. They came with everything I needed. Josef [Leberer, Mika's trainer] was with me in hospital. My manager [Didier Coton] was also there. My girlfriend was flown in. I was in hospital for five weeks or something.

I was in such pain, it really wasn't nice. Ron [Dennis] and Mansour [Ojeh] organised the plane to fly me back to England. Nothing was too much trouble. It was a huge, huge accident, a shocking thing but it was nothing to do with the team. All these people – and some of them are very sadly no longer here – were just incredible. I'll never forget what they did.



THE LONG-AWAITED FIRST F1 WIN

Ah, my first F1 victory [European GP, Jerez, 1997]. I'm on the 'phone – but who am I talking to? My parents were there. So, who was it? That's a good question.

Anyway, I was very fortunate David [Coulthard] gave me a little bit of help. Something happened during the race; a tyre stop that didn't go right for me [he was delayed at the first round of stops and Coulthard emerged ahead]. The team said: "David; you have to let Mika come past." So, he did – and I won.

There was a lot of talk about this at the time. But I got a victory, which was an important thing for me. I didn't really feel like I had won it straight, because we weren't fastest and we were helped a bit. But I didn't feel like: 'Let's not celebrate. We aren't the winners.' No, no, no! So, we did. The only thing that bothers me now is who am I speaking to on the 'phone?

TEARS AFTER SPINNING OUT AT MONZA

OK, I thought I might see this one! Leading the [1999] Italian GP and spinning off – that was mega annoying. There were a couple of issues: I was on antibiotics before that weekend, I was quite sick, so my performance wasn't the ultimate. Nevertheless, you're professional and you do your job.

Fighting with Ferrari for the championship again, we decided on a different tactic. I had the opportunity to be super-fast every lap because I needed to pull away a certain amount so I could make a pitstop and still come out in front. I was pushing every lap like an animal. Everything was going to plan.

During qualifying, we'd used first gear in the [first] chicane. For the race, we used second because we needed first gear for the start. So, flat out on the straight, going down the gears for the chicane and – oh, shit! – I went to first gear. It locked the rear wheels and she went off, into the gravel.

I was really upset because I wasn't 100% and I'd made a mistake. There was a third thing. We had a little issue with the automatic blip on the throttle when you go down a gear. The blip wasn't high enough, which made it worse when I went to first gear.

We didn't talk about this after race. If I'd said to everybody: "Oh, we made a mistake with the throttle settings," it wasn't going to change anything. I'd put it in the gravel, we lost the race. Move on. But so annoying.



SEALING THAT FIRST TITLE IN JAPAN

You can see this is Suzuka 1998. My first championship. This is so cool. It was a beautiful, beautiful weekend even though the pressure was enormous and Michael [Schumacher, Häkkinen's title rival] was on pole – which was really, really annoying. I needed to win this race and, again, the team were absolutely fantastic. They really gave me the space, with not too much marketing work and things like that. Ron was excellent when it came to details like that.

And the guys on the team – my engineers and so on – told me that we had a new front wing that would get more downforce at low speed. I think they may have lied to me – they just wanted to give me the confidence that maybe we had a better car, which I'm sure was true anyway. But this was a sign of how incredible the team was with me psychologically, trying to build me up.

The feeling was: there's no way Ferrari can beat us. Absolutely no way. We were so strong together. Nobody took any shit; we were fully focused. And then we did it. We did it! ▶



THE HARD-FOUGHT SECOND TITLE

So, this is Suzuka in 1999, when I won the race and the championship for a second time – which is good, of course. But my first thought when I see this picture is that it reminds me of one thing: winning the championship means unbelievable work for the [team's] marketing. In '98 we did a massive tour working with McLaren's different partners, event after event. It was three or four weeks non-stop. It was crazy. So exhausting.

And the same thing is about to happen again in '99. It's like when you're in a sauna. You sit there and, when this thing is hot, you put on water and then it makes the steam. So, when you win the championship, you're hot! You have to add the water and that means doing all the marketing work to make the most of it. If you lose, there's no point. Who cares? Ron Dennis was very hard on this. I knew plenty of work was coming my way when this photo was taken!



LAYING DOWN THE LAW WITH MICHAEL SCHUMACHER

In 1990, I had an accident in Formula 3 with Michael Schumacher in the Macau GP. I was following him on the straight and about to overtake at 230-240km/h. I could see his eyes in the mirror – and he just turned like this [indicating right] and I crashed into him. What can I do? Nothing. He won the race. This is racing. But I was thinking: 'This is not really very nice.'

So, this is Spa 2000 – and Michael did the same again. I was catching him and going so much quicker. And he just went left – and then right. Come on, man! The discussion here is me saying: "Michael, you simply cannot do this. We are going 320-330km/h. We could get – I could get – killed. If I touch you, I'm gonna fly."

Michael just looked at me and said: "Mika, this is racing." This was a long time ago and I don't look at this in a bad way. It was Michael's character, his way of going motor racing. We're all different. That's what makes it exciting.





JO RAMIREZ: A PIVOTAL FIGURE


Ah, this is really nice. It was my last win and I'm with Jo Ramirez, a super-important guy in my career. When I joined McLaren in 1993, I was lost. I was in a huge team and my English wasn't good enough to communicate properly. I was very shy and Jo [McLaren team co-ordinator] was really taking care of me. He was going to dinner with me and introducing me to people and he didn't have to do that.

Having him here in this picture is very important to me. But I also have to say this race [the 2001 US GP at Indianapolis] was emotional for another reason because this was just [two weeks] after 9/11. F1 had been thinking about 'are we going there or not?' It was a very good decision to go. The people there really appreciated it.

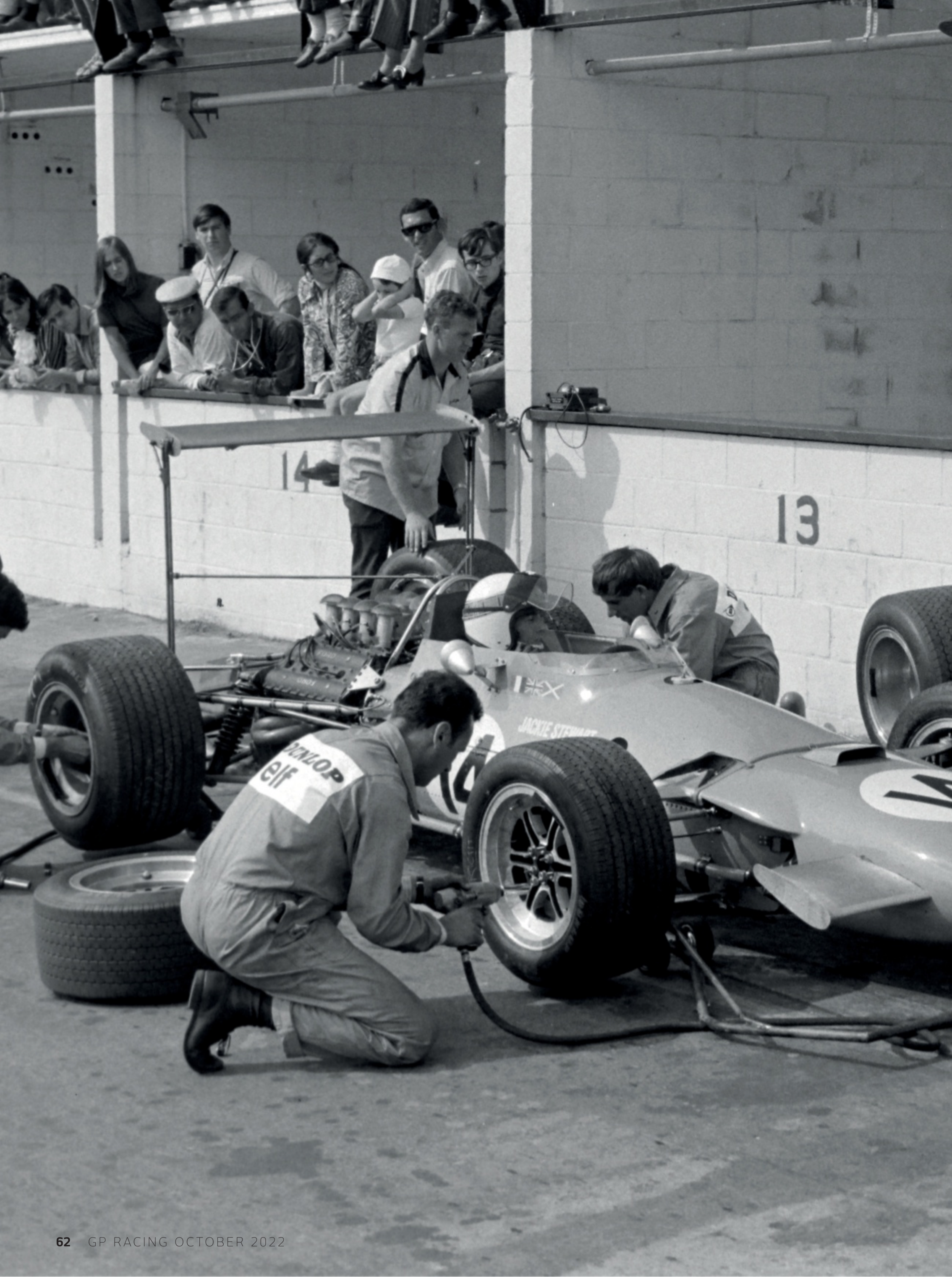
THE 'SABBATICAL' THAT BECAME RETIREMENT

This was my last GP [Japan 2001]. You want to know what I'm thinking when I look at this? I'm thinking the English sense of humour is really weird! Giving me a beach ball in an F1 paddock? Weird! When you retire from F1, it doesn't mean that you're going to sit on the beach and drink beer from morning to evening.

F1 was one part of my career. But after F1, there's also life, business and different experiences. We did talk about me maybe coming back in a year or something – and I had a huge appreciation that the team was prepared to give me that opportunity. But then, after four months, I thought: 'No way!'

The level of work you need to do in F1 is just... well, I'd been through it and knew exactly what was involved. It had been a fantastic part of my life. And that bit was over. 





ZERO

THE HISTORY OF TYRRELL

TO

PART 2: 1967-69

HERO

With a bit of wheeling and dealing, Tyrrell broke into Formula 1 with a powerful combination of Matra chassis and Ford-Cosworth engine, allied to the sublime skills of Jackie Stewart

WORDS MAURICE HAMILTON PICTURES



motorsport
IMAGES

Ken Tyrrell oversees his small team working on Jackie Stewart's Matra MS10 during practice for the 1968 Canadian GP



Stewart, helmet in hand, is just one of many interested in the Ford-Cosworth DFV in the back of Jim Clark's Lotus at Zandvoort in 1967

Ken Tyrrell's presence at the 1967 Dutch Grand Prix had not been deemed significant enough to warrant a mention in the news and gossip columns of *Autosport* – perhaps no surprise when the magazine's esteemed founding editor and race reporter was proudly pictured formally and enthusiastically opening a new press bar sponsored by Heineken. There was no hint in print – not that the secretive Tyrrell would have given anything away – of Ken's embryonic plan to start his own F1 team; an ambition fired by the stunning debut at Zandvoort of the Ford-Cosworth DFV engine in the back of Jim Clark's winning Lotus 49.

The fact that the V8 was not for sale at that point was an irrelevance as far as Tyrrell was concerned. The 3-litre engine was, in Ken's words, "the future." And he intended to be a part of it even though there was absolutely nothing F1-related to be found within the modest workshop of the Tyrrell Racing Organisation in a former woodyard in Surrey.

Jackie Stewart had also been impressed by the power and performance of the British-built V8. The Scotsman had enjoyed – if that's the right word – a ringside seat as his BRM, between three and four seconds off the pace, was lapped by the Lotus. The BRM was handicapped by an H16 engine which, compared with the DFV, was overcomplicated and overweight. If Tyrrell could envisage a bright road ahead, Stewart could only see a gloomy cul-de-sac if he stayed with BRM for a fourth season in 1968.

In the coming weeks, Stewart would hold discussions with Enzo Ferrari and shake hands on a deal – only to discover a few days later that Ferrari was offering the same seat to Jacky Ickx. The timing was perfect for Tyrrell to approach a momentarily vulnerable Stewart with an idea Jackie might have dismissed as fanciful had he not become familiar with Tyrrell's honesty and pragmatism.

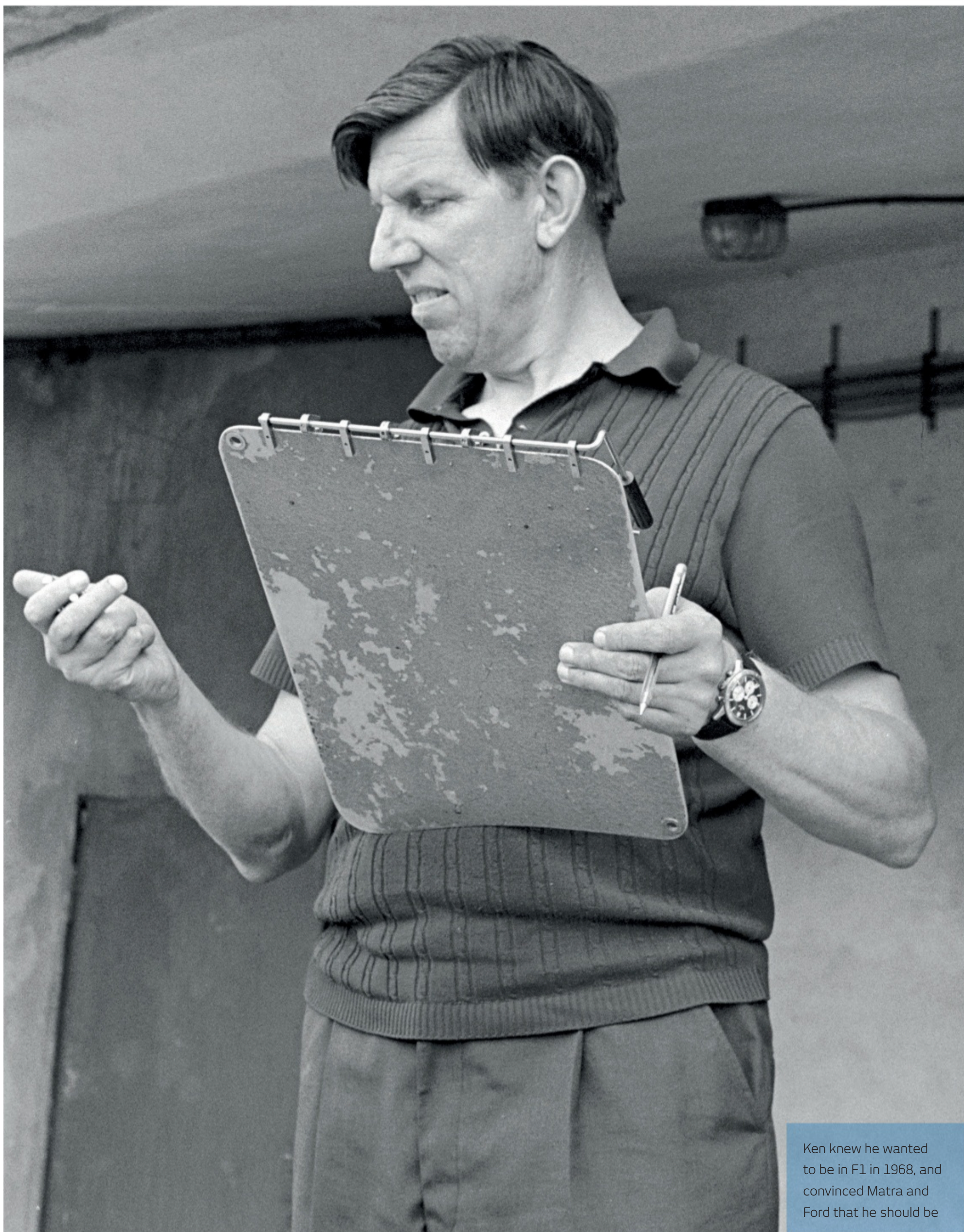
Four seasons spent racing with Tyrrell in F3 and F2 had told Jackie all he needed to know about Ken's blunt common sense and a fundamental desire to do things right. When Tyrrell mentioned stepping up to F1, Stewart

was prepared to listen, particularly when Ken said he hoped the DFV (when it became widely available in 1968) would be carried in the back of a Matra chassis. Having raced the F2 Matra, Stewart did not need to be told about the French car's precision of design and handling.

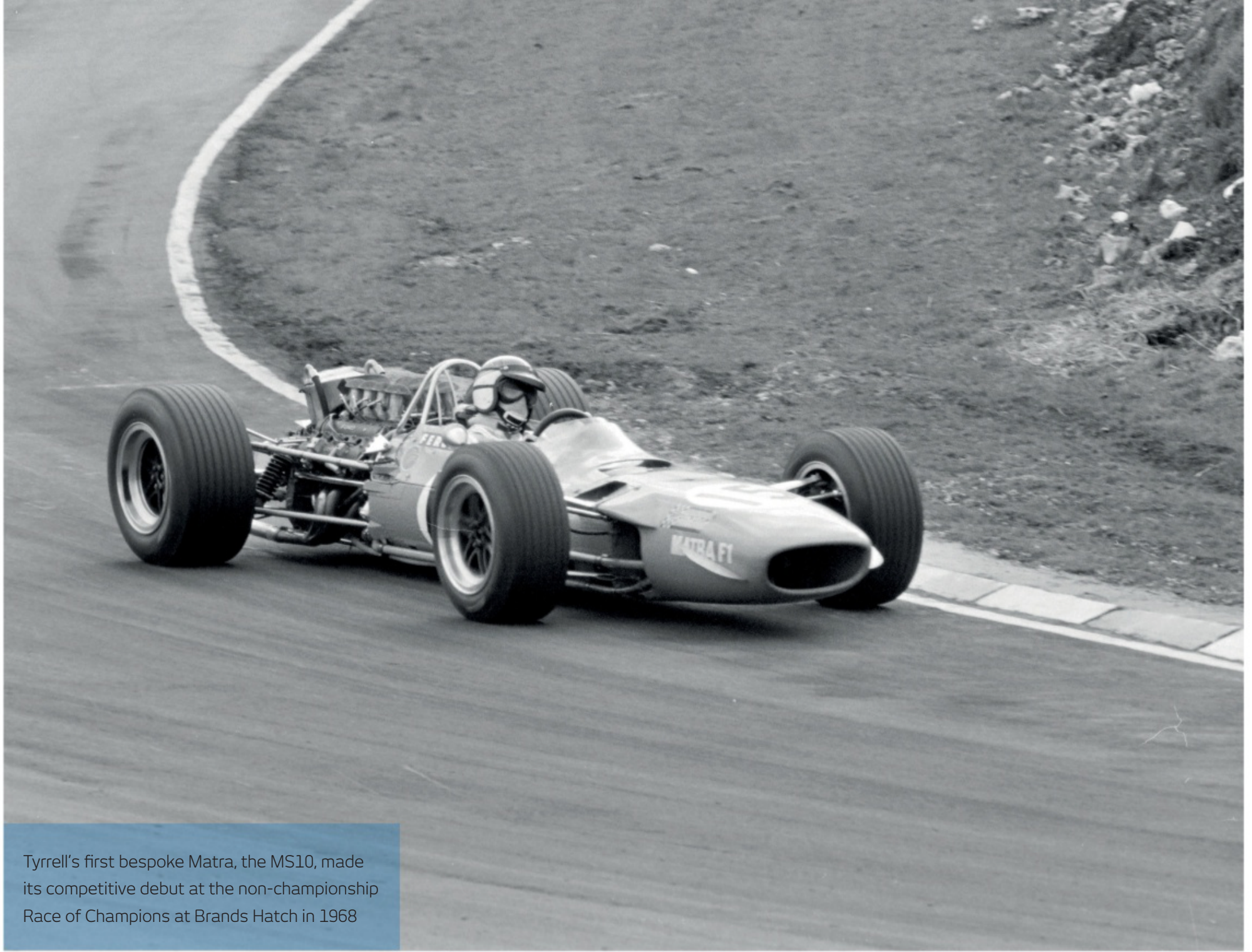
This was a pivotal moment for Tyrrell. To persuade Matra to supply a chassis for F1, Ken would need to have a 'star' driver. Despite having just two GP wins to his name, Stewart undoubtedly matched that criterion, which was why he had asked Ferrari for £20,000 – a retainer, Jackie made plain, Tyrrell would need to match. Ken didn't have the money, but he knew exactly where to start looking.

As a former national newspaper editor, Walter Hayes was a streetwise man with an interest in motoring. He had no hesitation in accepting the challenge of a role as the head of public relations for Ford of Britain and he just as quickly realised a connection with motorsport could transform Ford's image as the producer of rather mundane motor cars. This led to projects such as the Ford Lotus Cortina, which in turn ►

TO PERSUADE MATRA TO SUPPLY A CHASSIS FOR F1, KEN WOULD NEED TO HAVE A 'STAR' DRIVER. DESPITE HAVING JUST TWO GP WINS TO HIS NAME, STEWART UNDOUBTEDLY MATCHED THAT CRITERION



Ken knew he wanted to be in F1 in 1968, and convinced Matra and Ford that he should be



Tyrrell's first bespoke Matra, the MS10, made its competitive debut at the non-championship Race of Champions at Brands Hatch in 1968

brought Ford, through Colin Chapman of Lotus, into play as provider of the £100,000 (a tidy sum at the time) funding for the DFV engine.

Knowing this background and Hayes's patriotic leanings, Tyrrell made his pitch: that by guaranteeing the £20,000 necessary to have Jackie associated with the Ford-Cosworth V8 rather than a Ferrari V12, Hayes could prevent Stewart from going to 'that' Italian team. Hayes (by now vice president, Ford of Europe) agreed immediately on the understanding that the money would be repaid once Tyrrell had procured financial support from trade sponsors.

With that substantial box ticked, Tyrrell went to Matra and performed another powerful piece of persuasion. The French aerospace company, itself on the brink of entering F1 with its own car and V12 engine, could see the sense in having a back-up plan. This particular Matra chassis might be powered by a British V8, but it would be driven by Stewart and run by Tyrrell – a combination Matra liked and admired. The team would be known as Equipe Matra International.

Tyrrell now had his driver, chassis and engine in place. Which left the question of tyres. Ken had been loyal to Dunlop while racing in the junior formulae but the British firm's dominance in F1 had been badly eroded by the arrival of Firestone and Goodyear. Stewart and Tyrrell went to

Dunlop together and laid out their plans, the subtext being that Dunlop could be returned to its former F1 prominence thanks to a concentrated test and development programme – which would cost money. Dunlop agreed to provide financial as well as technical support. Tyrrell would now be able to repay Hayes. Job done.

With the deal in place, Tyrrell and Stewart shook hands. There was no written contract. And nor would there be during the next six seasons –

WITH THE DEAL IN PLACE, TYRRELL AND STEWART SHOOK HANDS. THERE WAS NO WRITTEN CONTRACT

an extraordinary and revealing act of trust by today's litigious norms.

There was neither pomp nor ceremony attached to what would be a massive step forward for this small team. The first serious confirmation of the F1 venture received by Tyrrell's chief mechanic, Neil Davis, was

the delivery in late 1967 of a Ford-Cosworth DFV with instructions from Ken to take it immediately to Paris for installation in the first Matra-Ford, the MS9. This would be based on the F2 Matra, the MS7, with which the team was familiar. Nonetheless, it would be a rush job to have the car ready in time for shipment by sea to Cape Town, from where it would be taken by train to Johannesburg and on to Kyalami in time for the South African GP on 1 January 1968.

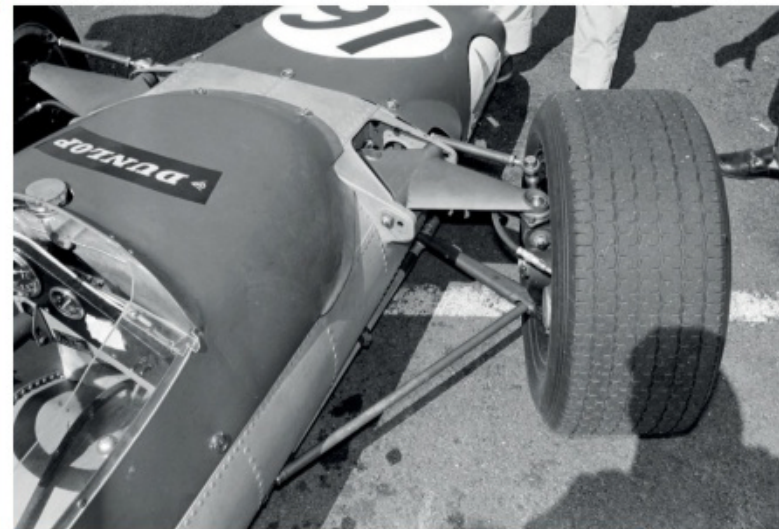
There had been no time to apply a finishing coat of paint, and the tatty appearance was exacerbated by overheating problems and a butchered nose to allow more air to reach the radiator.

Looks mattered little, however, when Stewart put the MS9,

in unimposing khaki primer, on the front row and actually led briefly before a split oil cooler brought retirement. It was an encouraging start by a team represented in South Africa by Tyrrell and his wife Norah, Stewart, Davis and just two mechanics. They may have been small in number but the Tyrrell outfit showed seriousness of



Stewart qualified the rushed Matra MS9 on the front row in South Africa in 1968 and led briefly before retiring



The MS9 arrived in South Africa without a finishing coat of paint but that didn't matter to either Tyrrell or Stewart and they set to work



With Stewart injured, it was down to Jean-Pierre Beltoise (above) to race Tyrrell's MS10 at Jarama (middle) where he came home a distant fifth

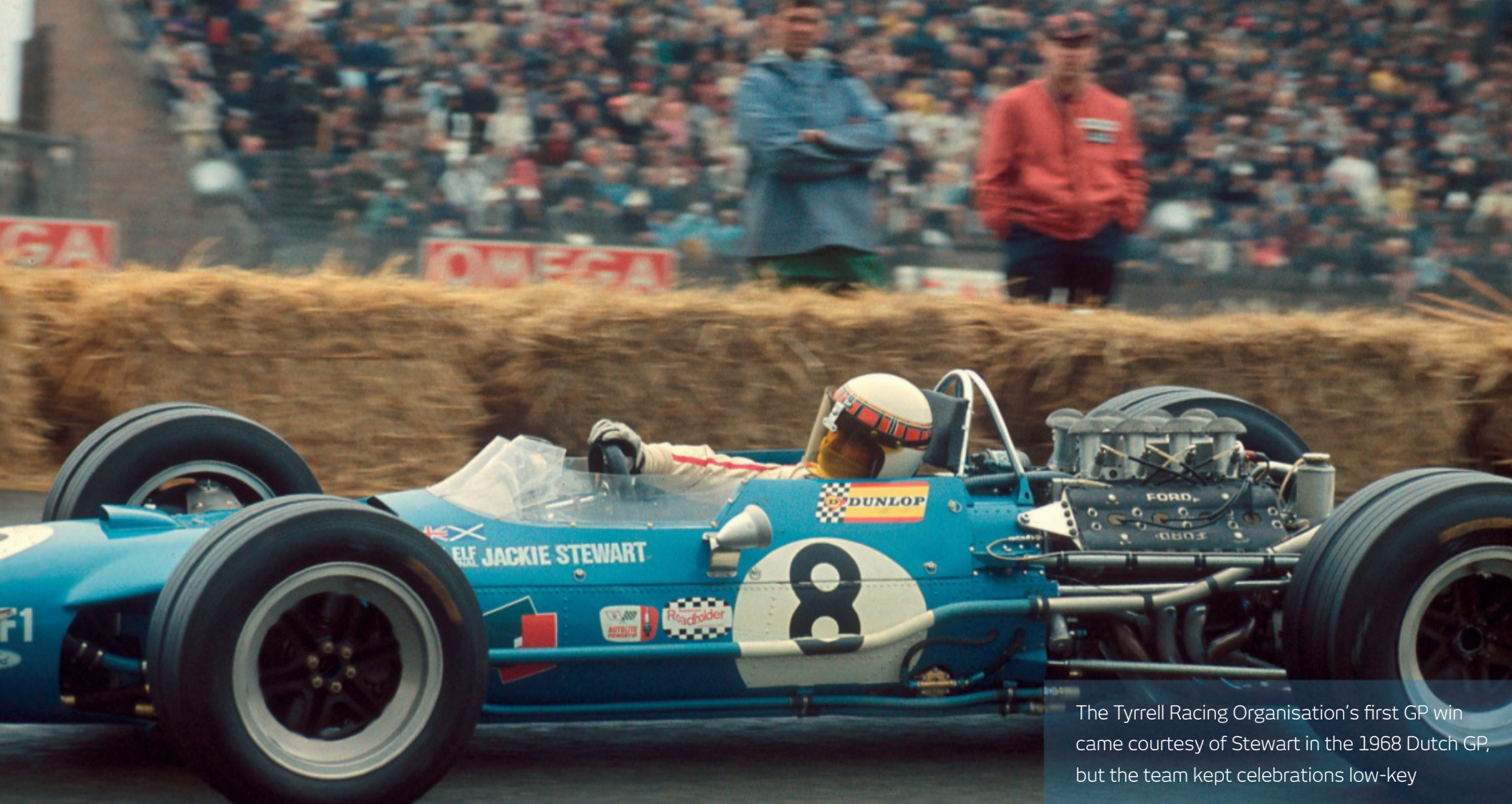
and ruin his F1 debut by trying to win Monaco on the first lap. The novice jumped into an immediate lead, pulled away – and clipped a kerb less than a minute later. Ken Tyrrell's

intent by remaining at Kyalami for a fortnight as Stewart completed 1,361 miles of testing – with the same engine. 156 of the 534 laps were below the lap record. A two-month gap to the next race allowed the many lessons learned to be incorporated in the design and build of the first proper Matra-Ford F1 car, the MS10.

The car's debut at the Race of Champions didn't amount to much as Stewart struggled to tame his MS10 on the bumps and undulations of Brands Hatch. A second, improved chassis was delivered by Matra for the second GP of the season at Jarama in Spain. Unfortunately, Stewart was unable to drive it. A broken scaphoid bone in his right wrist – the result of an accident in an F2 race – meant he would be out of racing for several weeks. Stewart's place would be taken by Jean-Pierre Beltoise, who was

waiting for Matra's own contender, the MS11, to be completed. Beltoise ran strongly and had just taken the lead when a pinched oil pipe caused the DFV to issue wisps, and then plumes, of blue smoke. After five laps spent in the pits, he rejoined to finish last. But a point – two, in fact, for fifth place – had been made.

To his great regret, Stewart remained out of action for Monaco. Since Matra had finally wheeled out the MS11 with its wailing V12 for the works team, Beltoise was unavailable, and the Tyrrell seat being taken by Johnny Servoz-Gavin. The young Frenchman with long blond hair proved he had pace to match his dashing looks when he put the blue Matra on the front row, alongside the Lotus 49 of Monaco master Graham Hill. Tyrrell and Stewart counselled Servoz-Gavin not to squander this opportunity



The Tyrrell Racing Organisation's first GP win came courtesy of Stewart in the 1968 Dutch GP, but the team kept celebrations low-key

Tyrrell was mightily impressed by Stewart's performance at the 1968 German GP (right and far right) when the Scot won in awful conditions

reaction is not recorded.

With Spa next, Stewart could barely wait to return to the cockpit and see what this car was capable of. Despite suffering discomfort from a plastic support for his lower arm and wrist, Stewart spent most of the Belgian GP in a fierce fight for fourth with Denny Hulme's McLaren (also with a Ford-Cosworth DFV). When Hulme – along with three cars in front – ran into trouble, Stewart found himself with a 30-second lead. This seemed too good to be true. It was.

To overcome a flat-spot in the engine at low revs, the fuel metering unit had been turned up – which proved a notch too far in a hard-fought race when the MS10 ran out of fuel at the end of the penultimate lap. Stewart coasted into the pits (located on the downhill run to Eau Rouge) for a splash and dash, rejoining to finish fourth; a decent result on any occasion other having come so close to a win. The little team was devastated.

Tyrrell was never a man to make rash predictions – not that there was a social media-inspired pack of journalists hovering in 1968 to probe and predict his every move. But even if the cautious Ken was daring to believe that a win might actually come sooner rather than later, he didn't say a word. Not even to his team. The forthcoming Dutch GP was simply treated as another race – so let's get on with it.

In any case, Stewart didn't hold out much hope of his wrist – badly swollen after Spa – coping with the fast sweeps of Zandvoort. Then came salvation in the shape of rain sweeping in from the North Sea and a superb Dunlop 'wet' to deal with it. At the end of the fourth lap, Stewart



was in the lead, where he would stay for the next two hours and 46 minutes. It seemed an excruciatingly long time as the team waited for its car to complete the last of 234 miles. Tyrrell Racing Organisation/Equipe Matra International was a GP winner. And yet, as Stewart would recall, "I don't remember it being a wild celebration or anything like that. Typical Ken!"

Six weeks later Stewart would win again. On this occasion, however, Tyrrell would be staggered by everything he witnessed during an atrociously wet German GP. The Nürburgring



remotely viable today. Stewart would say he had never been more terrified in a race car. But the paradox was he needed to take abnormal risks to move forward quickly from sixth on the grid to become free of blinding spray and have any chance of surviving 14 laps of what he described as "The Green Hell".

By the end of the first lap he led by eight seconds. Two hours later, after somehow dealing with a sticking throttle, rivers of water and a track surface that changed by the lap, Stewart was so far in front that he had vacated the car and was

standing on the podium when the third-placed driver crossed the line. Ken would always maintain this was one of the greatest drives he had ever seen.

Almost as a surprising aside, given the Tyrrell team's modest ambitions in

its first year, the nine points moved Stewart into second place in the drivers' championship. He seemed to have slipped from contention during the next two races but a win in the US GP in ►

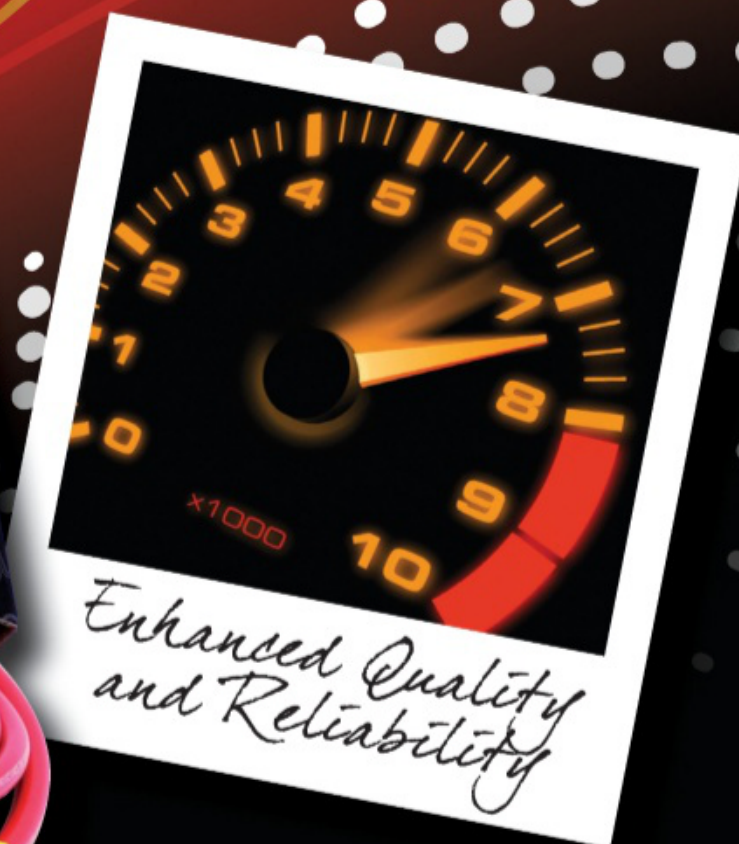
KEN WOULD ALWAYS MAINTAIN THIS WAS ONE OF THE GREATEST DRIVES HE HAD EVER SEEN

Nordschleife was difficult enough when the sun shone but the risk to life and limb took on a shocking, almost irresponsible aspect in conditions no race organiser would consider

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BUT NOT EVEN TYRRELL, FOR ALL HIS RETICENCE AND CAUTION, COULD HAVE FORESEEN THE ABSURD SCENARIO THAT WAS ABOUT TO UNFOLD



Ken with wife Norah in the pits in Canada. This contributed to a feeling of family in what was a very small team, even in 1968



Mechanics work on Stewart's Matra MS80 in the famous Tyrrell woodshed in Long Reach, Ockham, during the successful 1969 season

early October put Jackie into a three-way fight for the title in Mexico. A fuel pick-up problem while challenging Hill's winning Lotus may have denied Tyrrell what would have been an exceptional achievement, but everyone knew the steep learning curve had been perfect preparation for what was to come.

Matra had also received valuable lessons, the toughest being that its attempt to build a chassis *and* an engine in-house had been over-ambitious. For 1969, the focus would be on Tyrrell and a stunning new car, the Matra MS80. Stewart would later recall this to be the best racing car he had ever driven – and with good reason. He used it to win five times (following victory with the


MS10 at the opening round in South Africa) and wrapped up the world championship at Monza with three races to go. No one came close to disturbing the Tyrrell hegemony. Typically, the team barely recognised it. Roger Hill, one of six mechanics, summed up the Tyrrell ethos.

“Obviously, we were really pleased to have won the championship,” said Hill. “But I can’t remember anything about a celebration. There was no wild partying or anything like that. We packed up and got on with the job. It was



Stewart narrowly beats Jochen Rindt to the chequered flag to win the 1969 Italian GP at Monza, and with it the title with three races left

the way Ken worked. He was very, very good at keeping feet on the ground and ensuring everyone pulled in the same direction all the time. It was the same with Mrs. Tyrrell. She was always worried about us, be it a mechanic, a truck driver or Ken. She kept an eye on everyone. That and Ken's attitude just kept this feeling of family within the team. Yes, sure it was nice to win. But Ken was always looking round the corner to see what was coming next.”

But not even Tyrrell, for all his reticence and caution, could have foreseen the absurd scenario that was about to unfold. The reigning world champion faced the very real possibility of not having a car to race in 1970. 



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The ugly beginning
of the title-winning
Williams-Honda partnership

NOW THAT WAS A CAR

No. 113

WORDS
STUART COOLING
PICTURES
JAMES MANN



WILLIAMS FW09



Aesthetics count for little in Formula 1. The FW09 was neither the prettiest nor the fastest car to emerge from the Williams works, but it remains a pivotal machine in the team's – and F1's – history. It was the first turbocharged Williams, the first manufacturer-aligned Williams, and the car which delivered Honda to the winners' circle upon its return to the world championship.

As early as 1981 it had become obvious to Frank Williams that he needed a supply of turbocharged engines to remain competitive over the long term. The question was who that supplier might be – certainly not Ferrari or Renault, since they had their own teams which they would naturally prioritise. Honda emerged as a potential candidate. Throughout that year word circulated that the Japanese giant might be tempted back to the top category as an engine supplier rather than an entrant in its own right.

In Formula 2, Geoff Lees was beating the likes of Thierry Boutsen, Eje Elgh (now Marcus Ericsson's manager), Stefan Johansson and Michele Alboreto to the European championship aboard a Honda-powered Ralt chassis. Frank opened a line of communication with Honda, acknowledged with polite interest, but it became clear the company didn't see itself as being ready for F1 competition until 1983 at the earliest, and even then it sought a low-profile entrance. Williams would just have to wait – with mounting angst, since high-profile backer Mansour Ojjeh transferred his allegiance to McLaren *and* was persuaded to underwrite development of a new Porsche-built turbo V6 for that team's exclusive use.

For 1982 Honda supported Boutsen's team manager John Wickham to found a new F2 team, Spirit, with ex-McLaren engineers Gordon Coppuck and John Baldwin designing the chassis (initially in a rented house in Camberley). If successful they might move on together to F1. And so it came to pass: the marriage of Spirit 201 chassis and naturally aspirated 2-litre Honda V6 proved competitive, and Wickham managed to secure Marlboro backing to run Boutsen and Johansson. They fell short of winning the F2 title but by the end of the season Wickham was informed that Spirit had been chosen to test the prototype F1 engine.

During that time a tragic and ill-tempered F1 season played out in which Gilles Villeneuve and Riccardo Paletti died in needless accidents, and Didier Pironi suffered life-changing injuries. On 25 September, fifth place at the last Caesars Palace Grand Prix was enough for Keke Rosberg to secure the drivers' championship in his Williams FW08, though the team was only fourth in the constructors' standings. Two months later Spirit decamped to the US to perform the first track tests of Honda's RA163E V6 in secret with a modified F2 tub at Willow Springs and Riverside Raceway.

The pre-season period in 1983 was unusually fraught, owing to the FIA diktat mandating all cars to have flat bottoms, eliminating ground effect. For Williams, as with all other teams, that meant a last-minute redesign and carrying inherent compromise through the season.

But Frank already had an eye on the following year: in February 1983, just a few weeks before travelling to Brazil for



the opening round, he signed a contract with Honda for 1984.

The company was less certain about its plans for 1983: Spirit wanted to race, but didn't receive a firm commitment until the night before the closing date for entries in early March. That meant the opening rounds would be out of the question but Spirit put Johansson on the grid of the Race of Champions at Brands Hatch in April, with the RA163E installed in the back of an F2 chassis. It lasted five laps before expiring in a cloud of smoke when a turbo seal failed. ▶

FRANK ALREADY HAD AN EYE ON THE FOLLOWING YEAR: IN FEBRUARY 1983 HE SIGNED A CONTRACT WITH HONDA FOR 1984





WILLIAMS FW05

**NOW
THAT
WAS
A
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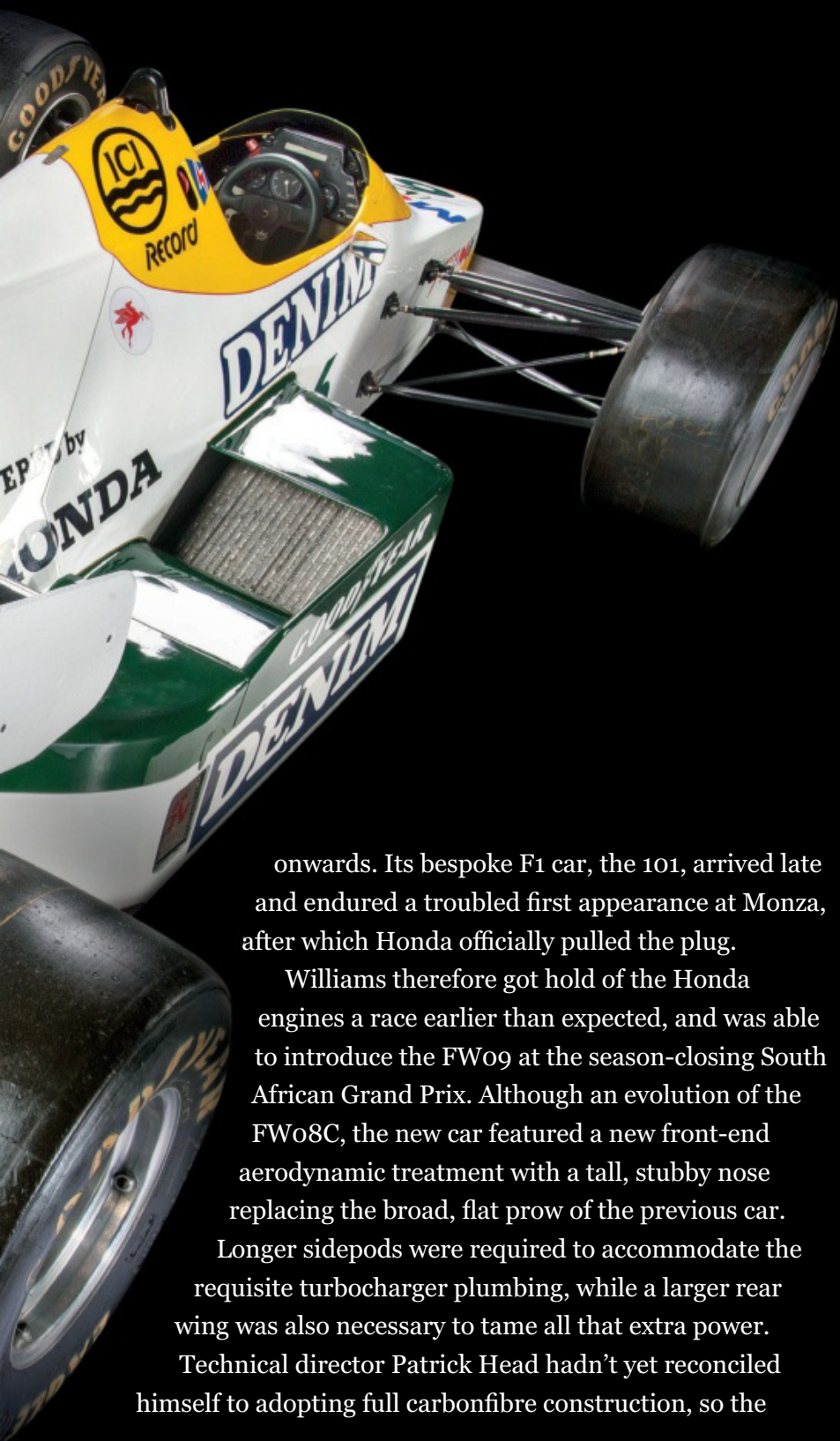
As it would three decades later when re-entering F1 during the hybrid era, Honda required several iterative attempts to get its engine package right. The RA163E was based on the same architecture as the F2 engine, but with a shorter stroke to bring its swept capacity down to the 1.5-litre limit. It was already an oversquare design; chief engineer Nobuhiko Kawamoto and his team had stripped and analysed the engines built by their F2 competitors, noted the 89mm bore of the four-cylinder BMW, and designed their V6 with a 90mm bore in the belief that the greater piston surface area would yield one and a half times the power. This theory was unproved in F2 and would remain that way in F1. The electronic fuel injection, used at the insistence of Soichiro Honda himself, also proved problematic.

Given the disadvantage of running with a naturally aspirated engine Williams had a decently competitive 1983 season with the much-modified FWo8C, although the returning Jacques Laffite proved disappointingly anonymous. Rosberg, however, was at his fiery best. At Monaco, where rain ahead of the start made track conditions treacherous for the peaky turbo-powered runners, Rosberg seized the moment and ran clear on slick tyres. There would be only one more grand prix win for a naturally aspirated engine (Alboreto in Detroit) until 1989.

Meanwhile electrical problems and other reliability issues stymied Spirit's progress from its debut at Silverstone

THE NEW CAR FEATURED A NEW FRONT-END AERODYNAMIC TREATMENT WITH A TALL, STUBBY NOSE





onwards. Its bespoke F1 car, the 101, arrived late and endured a troubled first appearance at Monza, after which Honda officially pulled the plug.

Williams therefore got hold of the Honda engines a race earlier than expected, and was able to introduce the FW09 at the season-closing South African Grand Prix. Although an evolution of the FW08C, the new car featured a new front-end aerodynamic treatment with a tall, stubby nose replacing the broad, flat prow of the previous car.

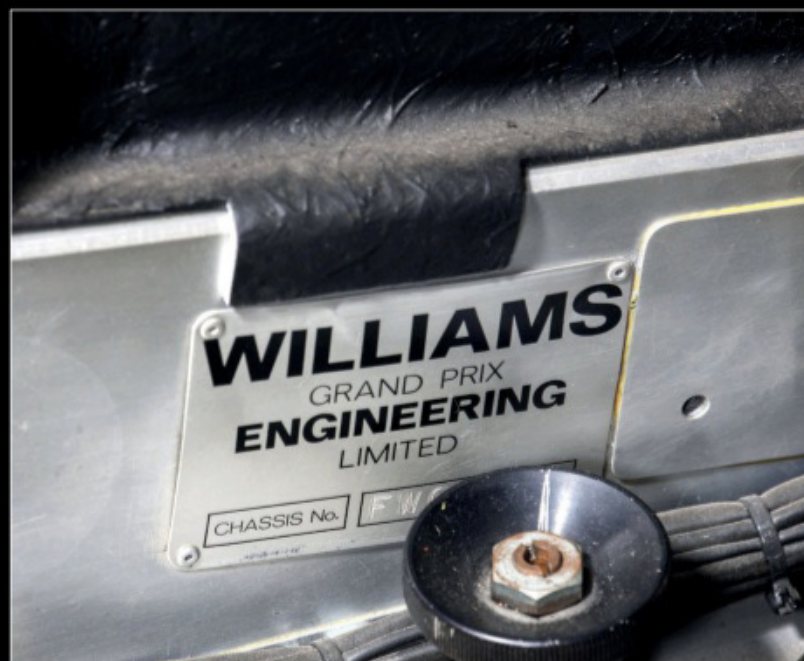
Longer sidepods were required to accommodate the requisite turbocharger plumbing, while a larger rear wing was also necessary to tame all that extra power.

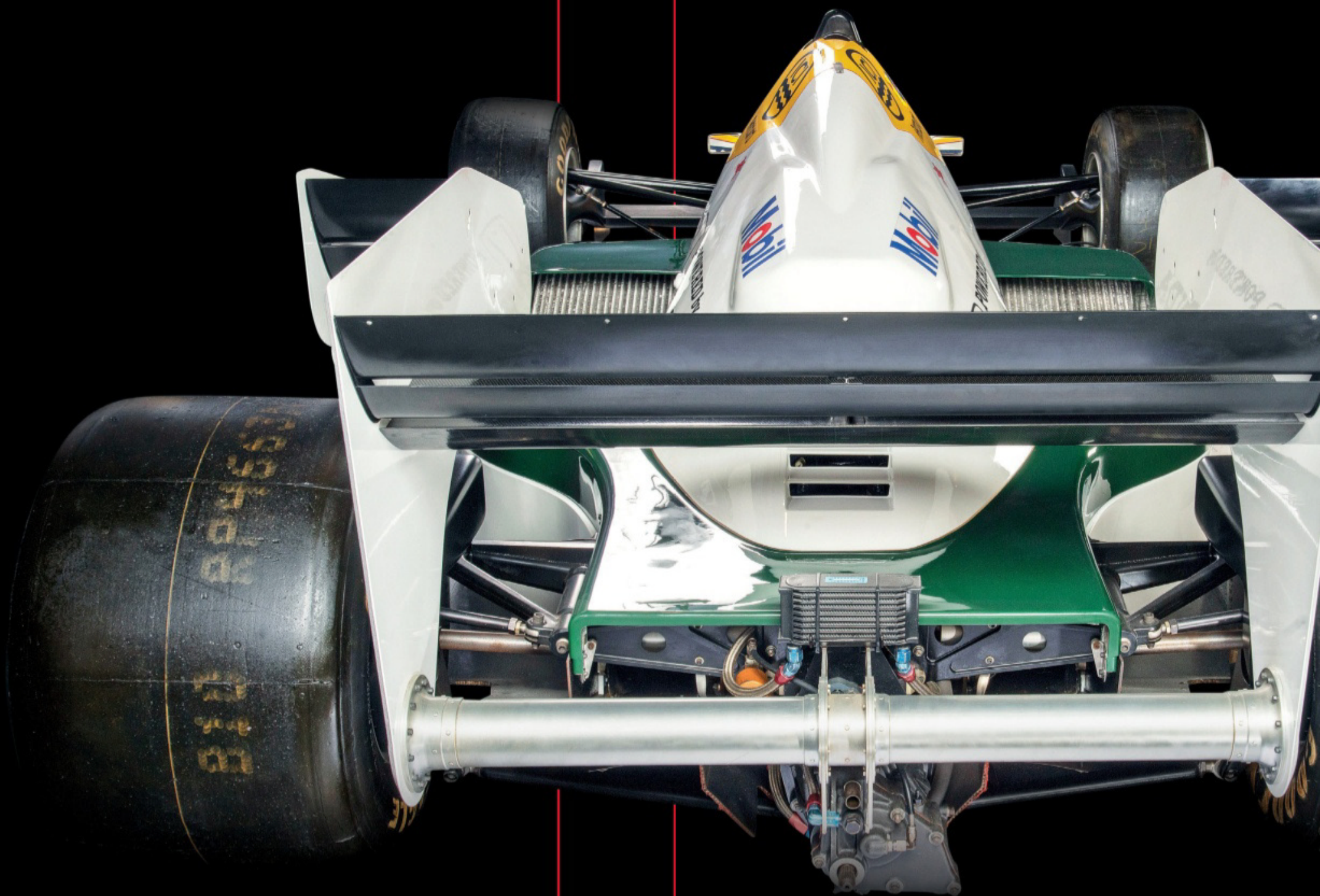
Technical director Patrick Head hadn't yet reconciled himself to adopting full carbonfibre construction, so the

WILLIAMS FW09

NOW THAT WAS A CAR

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WILLIAMS FW09

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FW09's chassis was a traditional aluminium honeycomb design featuring a handful of carbonfibre inlays. This would prove to be one of the car's key flaws.

Between the peaky power delivery of the Honda V6 and the car's tendency to flex under duress, the drivers could never be sure which way the FW09 would hop next. Rosberg, a gifted and abnormally brave driver, described it as a car in which "you had to hang on for dear life".

While Laffite qualified 10th and spun off on the second lap, Rosberg qualified sixth and finished fifth at Kyalami, albeit a lap down on the leading group. The FW09's shortcomings would not be revealed in full until the following season.

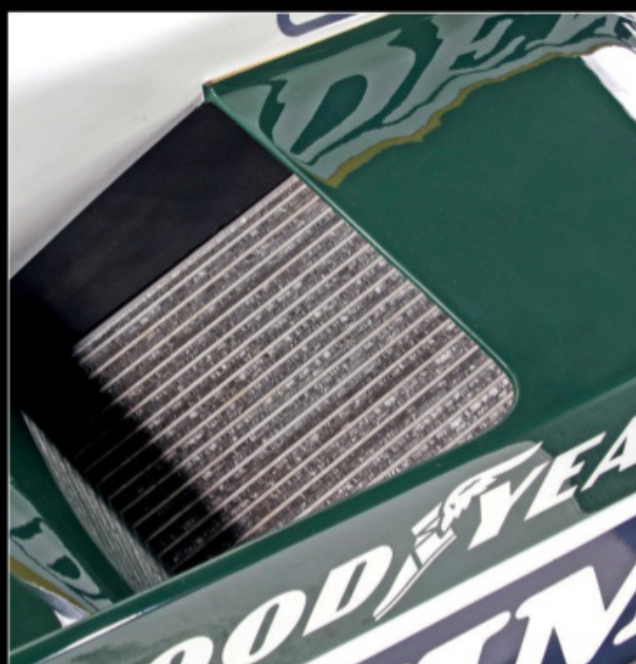
Although Rosberg finished second in the punishing heat of the 1984 season opener at Jacarepaguá, he was 40s down on race winner Alain Prost. McLaren's new MP4/2 set a new benchmark in F1 car design; not only was it John Barnard's second full carbon monocoque, it had been developed in tandem with the new TAG-Porsche engine. The V6 and all its ancillaries had been packaged within a silhouette drawn by Barnard and policed by him throughout development (he remains happy to admit that if he caught Porsche's engineers deviating from his carefully drawn outline, he would scream

down the 'phone at them). In comparison the Honda V6 was a sprawling mess of pipework, as evinced by the FW09's comparatively portly posterior.

The Honda engine continued to be unreliable, and Williams registered eight double-DNFs over the course of the 16-race season, 21 failures in all. The one bright spot came at the unloved Dallas street circuit in July; on a brutally hot day Rosberg overcame many challenges, including a disintegrating track surface, to win by 22s from Ferrari's René Arnoux.

At the following round Williams introduced the B-spec FW09 with a slightly lighter chassis and revised aerodynamics, including a replica of what Barnard referred to as the "Coke bottle" on his MP4/2: a more tightly waisted section behind the sidepods to optimise airflow between the rear wheels and the engine/gearbox shroud. But aero was among the least of the car's problems.

In Austria the reason for Rosberg's retirement is listed as 'handling'. This euphemistic description covers an unpalatable truth: the car was dangerously undriveable. Back then, what is now Turn 4 of the Red Bull Ring was a fast, downhill 180-degree curve with no run-off. Under any reasonable cornering load the car would just let go. Rosberg headed to the



pits from ninth place and bluntly told Head: “I cannot drive it.”


Patrick was always one to take an uncompromising view of drivers and the task they were employed to perform. The previous year, in Brazil, Rosberg had jumped out of his FW08C when it briefly caught fire in the pits, only to be instructed to “Get back in the fucking car.”

ROSBERG HEADED TO THE PITS FROM NINTH PLACE AND BLUNTLY TOLD HEAD: “I CANNOT DRIVE IT”

On this day at the Österreichring Head offered no argument.

The proliferation of failures to score meant Rosberg finished eighth in the drivers’ standings, Laffite 14th; Williams rounded out the season sixth in the constructors’ championship. But by this point the reasons were well understood. Many engine breakages were traced to electrical problems or heat-induced piston damage. Honda’s next V6 – introduced early in the 1985

season – would be better packaged, feature a less extreme bore/stroke ratio and deliver greater power in a more linear fashion.

Another lesson provided by the FW09 was that Williams *had* to produce a more rigid chassis, and to that end Head and his team adopted full carbon composite construction for the 1985 FW10. That car claimed four victories in the hands of Rosberg and new team-mate Nigel Mansell, but even greater glory was around the corner... 

RACE RECORD

Starts 34
Wins 1
Poles 0
Fastest laps 0
Podiums 0
Championship points 27.5

SPECIFICATION

Chassis Aluminium honeycomb monocoque
Suspension Double wishbones with pullrod-actuated inboard coil springs/dampers
Engine Turbocharged Honda RA163E 80-degree V6
Engine capacity 1495cc
Power 700bhp @ 11000 rpm
Gearbox Six-speed manual
Brakes Carbon discs front and rear
Tyres Goodyear
Weight 540kg
Notable drivers Keke Rosberg, Jacques Laffite

Recent moves within the driver market have reminded Maurice of a time when contracts weren't worth the paper they weren't written on...



OSCAR PIASTRI COULD EASILY HAVE painted himself into a difficult corner with his recent contract woes. Imagine the scenario: he walks into the McLaren garage at the first GP of 2023 to face a greeting like this from a person in papaya: "Er, 'scuse me. What you doin'?" "I'm getting into my car." "Hang on. Who are you?" "Oscar Piastri. I believe I'm your driver." "Just a minute, mate." The papaya person fishes in his pocket and produces various scraps of paper, all headed: 'McLaren Racing: Anything Considered'.

"Nope," he says. "Don't have your name here... Oh, wait, this list is for IndyCar. Lemme see... what's this one? Formula E – nope, you're not on this one either. Hang on, here's another – WEC, whatever that is. Looks like we need three drivers per car, so plenty of room there. Could stick your name down? Just need your credit card details. And your lawyer's name because, of course, we're pretty good at making other teams look silly with their contractual pants down. Also, Zak Brown says I need to check if you've any outstanding finance on an Alpine road car. The French have been cutting up a bit rough recently."

Far-fetched? Of course. But maybe not as much as you might think. One of Zak Brown's heroes, Enzo Ferrari, treated Stirling Moss with such blatant disregard that the Englishman swore never to drive for the Prancing Horse, an unyielding stance that arguably cost Moss the championship he never had and truly deserved.

Moss had first come to Ferrari's attention in 1949 when he turned up at a race in Italy and finished third on the tricky 10-mile Circuito del Garda road circuit. Moss was at the wheel of a rear-engined Cooper powered by a 1000cc twin-cylinder motorcycle engine. This spindly little machine may have been dwarfed and out-gunned by the V12 Ferraris ahead of it, but Moss's performance that day captured the imagination of the public – who, for some reason, christened the air-cooled Cooper 'The Jukebox'.

Moss continued playing the right tunes when he won the Tourist Trophy in a Jaguar XK120, his first international victory, in pouring rain on the fearsome Dundrod road circuit in Northern Ireland. The following day Moss celebrated his 21st birthday, which may be getting on a bit by today's standards for future F1 stars but, in 1950, Stirling was considered a lad when compared, say, with Juan Manuel Fangio, who had taken part in his first grand prix a couple of years before at the age of 38.

Moss had continued to impress racing abroad in his F2 HWM. The British car's suspension may have failed when leading on the streets of Erlen in Switzerland, but Stirling had done enough to warrant an invitation to Maranello. Moss thought nothing about making the 300-mile trip across the Alps in his Morris Minor (the equivalent of

today's Mini) for an audience with Enzo Ferrari.

With French as their common – if hesitant – language, it was agreed Moss would drive the new 2-litre Ferrari 500 at Bari on 2 September. Failing the car being ready in time, Moss would definitely race it two weeks later in the Italian GP at Monza. Even better, the Old Man wanted Moss to drive exclusively for Ferrari in 1952. Stirling described being the first British driver to receive such an invitation as "a terrific honour".

The sense of anticipation can be imagined as Moss and his father, Alfred (who helped manage his son's affairs), boarded a flight from London to Rome. Some of the glamour was admittedly lost on the overnight train travelling south-east towards Bari. Unable to sleep in the hot, stuffy carriage, Stirling attempted to open the window



THE BOTTOM LINE WAS THAT ENZO FERRARI (ABSENT ON A RACE WEEKEND, AS USUAL) HAD CHANGED HIS MIND AND TOLD EVERYONE – EXCEPT MOSS. STIRLING WAS LIVID AND LEFT FEELING COMPLETELY HELPLESS



Moss's 1951 performances at Dundrod (above, left) and the Swiss GP (above) brought him to the attention of Ferrari but, after offering Moss a drive, Enzo changed his mind...



The future of Piastri, seen here in Alpine kit for his role of reserve driver, went to the Contract Recognition Board, a far cry from the days of Moss when verbal agreements ruled

just as the train entered a tunnel, filling the compartment with smoke and ash.

All of that was forgotten on arrival as father and son located the garage being used by Ferrari and, to their delight, spied a brand new 500 sitting to one side. With time pressing, Moss hired a Fiat to become acquainted with the fast 3.4-mile Circuito del Lungomare through the city streets. Along the way, he met racing people, who confirmed the entry included Fangio and reigning world champion Giuseppe Farina in Alfa Romeo 159s, Luigi Villorosi

and Alberto Ascari in a pair of Ferrari 375s, plus 15 assorted single-seaters; a strong entry for a non-championship GP. With practice due to start at 8.30am, Moss went to bed a very happy man.

Up bright and early, Stirling turned up at the Ferrari garage to make himself comfortable in the F2 car. As he sat in the cockpit, a mechanic came across and asked Moss who he was and what he thought he was doing – or words to that effect. He may have been unable to speak Italian, but Moss got the message that this car was due to be driven by Piero Taruffi, the Italian veteran who had finished second for Ferrari in that year's Swiss GP. The bottom line was that Enzo Ferrari (absent on a race weekend, as usual) had changed his mind and told everyone – except Moss. Stirling was livid and left feeling completely helpless.

Contract Recognition Board? Don't be daft. In 1951, there were no contracts as we know the lengthy documents now, never mind a group of legal worthies to sit in judgement. Deals were often agreed verbally and perhaps confirmed by a telegram. The actual signing of a piece of paper would be a formality in every sense. Different days, maybe. But underpinned by the same fundamental values of integrity and trust you would hope continue to exist today.

SHOWCASE

THE SINGAPORE GP

The venue for F1's first-ever night race, Singapore makes a return to the calendar after a COVID-enforced break

▼ A view across the city, with the lights illuminating the track itself. Night races are now quite common in F1, but back in 2008 the Singapore GP was ground-breaking and provided the template for those GPs that followed its lead





The first Singapore GP in 2008 also turned out to be the most controversial. On lap 12 Renault's Fernando Alonso was the first driver to pit for fuel. Two laps later team-mate Nelson Piquet Jr hit the wall at Turn 17. Piquet quickly exited his car, the Safety Car was sent out, and the pits closed. Alonso went on to win the race, but a year later it was discovered Piquet had been ordered by the team to crash



Ferrari's Felipe Massa added to the excitement in the first Singapore GP. Massa pitted for fuel from the lead, as soon as the pitlane was re-opened after the Safety Car for Piquet's crash. Unfortunately Massa left the pit box with the fuel hose still attached. The hose was removed at the end of the pitlane and Massa rejoined at the back of the field, before being handed a penalty for an unsafe release



One of the downsides for drivers and anyone working at the Singapore GP is the heat and humidity. Drivers can lose up to 4kg during the race and try to minimise its effect beforehand by using cool jackets. For others such as this grid girl in 2010, a blast of dry ice from a friendly mechanic is very welcome





When Heikki Kovalainen's Lotus suffered a fuel problem on lap 58 of the 2010 race the Finn opted to pit. When he saw his car had caught fire Heikki sensibly aborted that plan and parked on the main straight before turning firefighter



Lewis Hamilton's commitment to F1 was called into question by some observers when he jetted to New York between the Italian and Singapore GPs in 2018. His response: a stunning pole lap which he couldn't quite believe himself. And the race win...



Sebastian Vettel had every right to look happy after winning the 2011 Singapore GP. The German had all but clinched a second consecutive world title. Only Jenson Button still had a slim mathematical chance of overhauling him



Because most of the track action at the Singapore GP takes place in the dark, it's very easy to forget that the Marina Bay Street Circuit is actually slap bang in the middle of a heavily populated city. And as you can see from this picture the rest of the populations gets on with 'normal' city life even when Formula 1 is on track



Nico Hülkenberg was tagged by Carlos Sainz at the start of the 2016 race and Hülkenberg's Force India careered into the pitwall. The Safety Car was scrambled and then withdrawn at the end of the second lap. As the car started to race going onto the third lap, this marshal was still clearing debris and had to make a quick escape



In 2017 Sebastian Vettel was three points behind championship leader Lewis Hamilton when he qualified his Ferrari on pole, with Hamilton only fifth. Seb's title hopes were severely dented when team-mate Kimi Räikkönen hit a slow-starting Max Verstappen and slammed into Vettel. To make matters worse Hamilton went on to win the race





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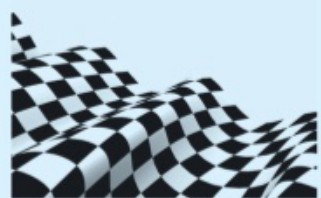
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FINISHING STRAIGHT

RACE DEBRIEF

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 14

THE BELGIAN GP
IN 5 KEY MOMENTS

It's now a case of when, not if, Verstappen wins the championship, but Spa showed that the Dutchman isn't taking his foot off the gas...

1 Verstappen romps to most commanding win yet

If any intrigue remains in the championship, it lies chiefly in whether Max Verstappen will be able to break the record for the number of victories in a single F1 season. And this is well within reach.

Max's win at Spa was his most convincing to date this season, perhaps the most impressive of his F1 career – so much so that it reminded team principal Christian Horner of the glory days when Red Bull collected trophies in heaps with Sebastian Vettel. "[It was] probably one of the most dominant performances that we've had as a team since

either 2010 or 2013. I think it's right up there with that period," Horner said. "And I don't think we've ever won a race starting from 14th on the grid."

He's not wrong. Vettel never won a race for Red Bull starting from a position lower than third.

Max ended up starting from the middle of the second half of the Belgian GP grid because of penalties for replacing power unit elements. Verstappen was one of the drivers whose teams decided to use the weekend in Belgium – one of the most overtaking-friendly tracks on the calendar

– to replenish their component pools. Max got a new internal combustion unit, turbocharger, MGU-H and MGU-K, and was sent to the back of the grid – where he was joined by his championship rival (an appellation soon to be joined by the word "former") Charles Leclerc, Esteban Ocon, Lando Norris, Zhou Guanyu and Mick Schumacher. Right before the race, AlphaTauri also decided to change the power unit on Yuki Tsunoda's car, resulting in him starting from the pitlane.

The rules for allocating places on the starting



Leclerc's attempt to follow Verstappen through the field was ruined by an early stop, needed to remove a discarded visor tear-off



grid, taking into account all sorts of penalties for the replacement of PU elements and gearboxes, are a little simpler these days compared with the beginning of the hybrid era, but forming the Spa grid wasn't without its oddities: having received an overall penalty of 20 positions and qualified last, Valtteri Bottas was still granted the 13th slot on the grid – just ahead of Max, who topped qualifying, beating his closest rival by 0.6 seconds.

Max's pace, which he demonstrated throughout the weekend, left little doubt that even when starting 14th he would be fighting for a podium at least. Horner revealed after the race that Red Bull's simulation tools had predicted Max would be in the mix with Carlos Sainz and Sergio Pérez, who occupied the front row, towards the end of the race. But Verstappen himself had other plans.

Max gained one position before the start, when AlphaTauri's mechanics had to wheel Pierre Gasly's car back to the pits with an electrical issue. Verstappen then overtook Bottas, Nicolas Latifi, Kevin Magnussen and Lance Stroll on lap one, gaining another position after Lewis Hamilton's retirement. A Safety Car deployment put Max's progress on pause, but after the restart he immediately passed Alex Albon and Daniel Ricciardo. Over the next three laps Sebastian

Vettel, Fernando Alonso and George Russell also surrendered to Verstappen's RB18.

After completing lap eight, making Red Bull's simulations look quaintly out of touch in the process, Max set about chasing down Sainz and Pérez. He overtook his team-mate on lap 11, and on lap 18 – after both drivers had changed tyres – passed Sainz on the Kemmel straight. The overtake for the lead was so easy that Carlos was back on the racing line behind Max before the braking zone.

Red Bull is continuing to develop its car, and there's every reason to believe it's aiming for the RB18 to fit Max better and better.

"Once we settled in after the Safety Car, the car was really on rails," Verstappen said after winning his ninth race this year. "I picked the right places to pass people and we could look after our tyres and that's how we made our way forward."

In 2004, Michael Schumacher took 13 wins at the wheel of his Ferrari. Sebastian Vettel matched that feat in with Red Bull in 2013. The number has stood until now – but it seems that Max has all he needs to smash this particular record, too.

2 Another disappointing weekend for Leclerc

Circumstances contrived to prevent Charles Leclerc following his chief rival through to the front, with the result that the points gap between them grew once again. Leclerc also took on a new PU at Spa and started directly behind Verstappen, but his charge through the field was interrupted just a couple of minutes after the lights went out.

Charles kept to Max's pace on the first lap but,

as the pair went past Lewis Hamilton's Mercedes (which was losing fluids after a collision with Fernando Alonso at Les Combes), several drivers discarded tear-offs from their helmet visors. One of them – belonging to Lance Stroll – fluttered into the Ferrari's front-right brake duct. Soon enough Charles noticed smoke billowing from that area. As bizarre as it may seem, F1 cars worth millions of pounds can be fully compromised by a single tiny plastic strip – so Ferrari had no choice but to call its driver into the pits, ruining his race plan.

Charles had to start all over again. By the end of the race he had managed to elevate himself to fifth place, but Ferrari decided to heap more pressure onto his plate in the hope of snagging an additional point. Charles was called back to the pits for softs to try to steal the fastest lap from Verstappen, despite the risk of losing track position. The gap to sixth-placed Fernando Alonso wasn't big enough, but Ferrari's strategists figured Leclerc's new-tyre advantage would enable him to pass Alonso.

It worked out exactly like that, albeit temporarily. Even though Leclerc emerged behind Alonso, he regained the position on the final lap – only to lose it again after the flag. Owing to a sensor failure, the limiter on Leclerc's Ferrari malfunctioned and Charles was penalized by the stewards for speeding in the pitlane. Five seconds added to his time at the finish line dropped him back to sixth behind Alonso. And the bid to relieve Verstappen of the fastest lap had also failed.

This latest blunder – though less dramatic than other Ferrari mishaps this year – dropped Charles to third place in the standings. The driver who after the first three races had a 46-point lead over Verstappen left Spa 98 points in arrears. ▶



FINISHING STRAIGHT

RACE DEBRIEF

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 14



PICTURES: STEVEN TEE; ZAK MAUGER; MARK SUTTON; MICHAEL POTTS

It went badly wrong for Hamilton as he attempted to snatch second from Alonso

3 2007 vibes as Alonso and Hamilton clash again

Lewis Hamilton's streak of five consecutive podiums came to an inglorious conclusion in Belgium. Mercedes wasn't as competitive as it had been in Hungary before the summer break, and Lewis would have to pull off something special to break into the top three at the finish line. Perhaps that was on his mind when he launched his ultimately ill-fated attempt to overtake Fernando Alonso on lap one.

Mercedes looked particularly dismal on Saturday. Lewis, along with George Russell, lost out to both Alpine drivers in qualifying, although they lined up fourth and fifth as drivers ahead took engine penalties. Alonso grabbed third spot on the grid and took advantage of Sergio Pérez's slow start, making his way to second. Hamilton followed him and then tried to pass at the top of the hill, on the outside at the entry to Les Combes, but underestimated Fernando's desire to hold on to second position and left no room on the inside.

As Hamilton turned in his right-rear clipped the Alpine's left-front, sending the Mercedes into the air and across the run-off. While Hamilton landed on all four wheels the crunching touchdown dealt terminal damage to his car. Half a lap later he was forced to park it.

Hamilton accepted responsibility for the crash as soon as he got back to the paddock, but then refused to apologise to Alonso after hearing how Fernando reacted to their collision on the radio. "What an idiot closing the door from the outside,"

Alonso told his team in a message that was aired in the official broadcast. "We had a mega start but this guy only knows how to drive starting first."

Alonso had lost a couple of positions but, more importantly, his car was virtually undamaged as a result of the collision. He was able to finish the race, scoring another 10 points for the team.

Fernando apologised for his words a few days later. "When you say something on the radio, you think that you are talking with your engineer," he also pointed out, once again choosing to pretend that after 20-and-a-bit years in F1 he had forgotten that radio conversations between drivers and their teams are broadcast on TV.

4 Alpine pulls away from McLaren

Following the announcement that Fernando Alonso is leaving Alpine at the end of the year, Esteban Ocon will have only a handful of races to prove he can function as a proper lead driver for the French squad. His performance at Spa was more than convincing.

Knowing in advance he would have to start from the back of the grid because of PU-related penalties, Esteban made his way into Q3, where he not only helped Alonso with a tow but was also faster than Fernando on his lap.



Alonso was livid with Hamilton over the radio, but eventually apologised a few days later

Ocon's charge through the field on Sunday was almost as impressive as Verstappen's and featured two double-passes. On Lap 15 he overtook Daniel Ricciardo and Nicholas Latifi under braking into the Bus Stop chicane, and then 20 laps later he passed Sebastian Vettel and Pierre Gasly on the Kemmel Straight.

Esteban was even catching his team-mate towards the end of the race, but was instructed by the team to "hold positions".

"You don't gain any more points and you risk losing a bunch, so it made no sense [to let them



race],” explained Alpine’s boss Otmar Szafnauer. Ocon’s seventh-place finish brought Alpine an extra six points, which came very handy on a weekend when the McLarens came up short. Daniel Ricciardo dropped to 15th, despite starting seventh, and Lando Norris only managed to come home 12th after his back-of-the-grid start.

5 Albon holds off five cars to finish 10th

“It was, in my opinion, one of the best races I’ve had in Formula 1,” said Alex Albon after the finish. And it is difficult to argue with him. Albon started the race sixth on the grid after probably one of his most impressive qualifying performances. He progressed to Q3 for the first time this year with Williams, and then gained a few more places thanks to the many PU-related penalties handed to his rivals. To stay in the top 10 was a big task, but Albon made full use of the FW44’s strong straightline speed, holding off a train of cars in the closing stages. Lance Stroll, Lando Norris, Yuki Tsunoda, Zhou Guanyu and Daniel Ricciardo all finished

Ocon was impressive in Belgium, making his way through to seventh from 16th on the grid

within six seconds of Alex after 44 laps. “It felt like that last stint [was] just holding on,” he said. “I couldn’t make any mistakes, or else we were going to get passed straight away. But the top speed saved us a little bit, and I was glad I saw the chequered flag.”



Albon (above) used the FW44’s straightline speed (below) to hold on to 10th at the flag



RESULTS ROUND 14

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS / 28.08.22 / 44 LAPS








1st	Max Verstappen	Red Bull	1h25m52.894s
2nd	Sergio Pérez	Red Bull	+17.841s
3rd	Carlos Sainz	Ferrari	+26.886s
4th	George Russell	Mercedes	+29.140s
5th	Fernando Alonso	Alpine	+73.256s
6th	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	+74.936s*
7th	Esteban Ocon	Alpine	+75.640s
8th	Sebastian Vettel	Aston Martin	+78.107s
9th	Pierre Gasly	AlphaTauri	+92.181s
10th	Alex Albon	Williams	+101.900s
11th	Lance Stroll	Aston Martin	+103.078s
12th	Lando Norris	McLaren	+104.739s
13th	Yuki Tsunoda	AlphaTauri	+105.217s
14th	Zhou Guanyu	Alfa Romeo	+106.252s
15th	Daniel Ricciardo	McLaren	+107.163s
16th	Kevin Magnussen	Haas	+1 lap
17th	Mick Schumacher	Haas	+1 lap
18th	Nicholas Latifi	Williams	+1 lap

Retirements		
Valtteri Bottas	Alfa Romeo	1 lap - spin
Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	0 laps - accident

Fastest lap
Max Verstappen 1m49.354s on lap 32

TYRE COMPOUNDS USED



Hard (C2) Medium (C3) Soft (C4) Inter Wet

CLIMATE	AIR TEMP	TRACK TEMP
Sunny 	21°C	36°C

DRIVERS’ STANDINGS			
1 Verstappen	284pts	12 Vettel	20pts
2 Pérez	191pts	13 Ricciardo	19pts
3 Leclerc	186pts	14 Gasly	18pts
4 Sainz	171pts	15 Schumacher	12pts
5 Russell	170pts	16 Tsunoda	11pts
6 Hamilton	146pts	17 Guanyu	5pts
7 Norris	76pts	18 Albon	4pts
8 Ocon	64pts	19 Stroll	4pts
9 Alonso	51pts	20 Latifi	0pts
10 Bottas	46pts	21 Hülkenberg	0pts
11 Magnussen	22pts		





FINISHING STRAIGHT

RACE DEBRIEF

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 15

THE DUTCH GP IN 5 KEY MOMENTS



Verstappen claimed his second consecutive victory on home soil, and is now making a habit of winning, even when it seems unlikely

1 Verstappen enters unstoppable territory with second home win

Winning has become a firmly entrenched habit for Max Verstappen. The world champion has entered that privileged space where even when things go wrong, somehow an upside presents itself. While Max is driving brilliantly, he got away with a couple of spins in Spain and Hungary, has occasionally been helped by the opposition (or, let's just say Ferrari) flunking races, and in Zandvoort was assisted by a Virtual Safety Car at the right moment. Verstappen ended up winning his home race relatively easily, an outcome which had seemed unlikely.

Max took pole by just 0.021s over his closest pursuer, Charles Leclerc. Carlos Sainz was third in qualifying, beating Lewis Hamilton, who had to abort his last attempt when Sergio Pérez went off in the last corner. Toto Wolff claimed after the session that his driver was on his way to pole, but sector times suggest beating Verstappen would have been tough. Nevertheless it had already been clear after practice that Mercedes' W13 was fast on this track.

The race looked set to deliver a close finish resulting from a fascinating tactical battle. Max and the Ferrari drivers opted to start on softs, while Mercedes chose medium for the first stint and it worked almost perfectly for Hamilton. Lewis could have made his life much easier by overtaking Sainz at the start, but Carlos shut the door going into the Tarzan corner – leaving Lewis stuck behind the slower of the two Ferraris. Nevertheless, when by lap 18 (of 72) all the soft-starters had already made their first stops, Hamilton was still able to maintain a good pace with his mediums.

Ferrari by that point had already ceased to dream of a win. Leclerc had been keeping up with Max through the first few laps, but the F1-75s were eating up their tyres much faster, so by the end of their first stint Verstappen managed to build a four-second gap. From that moment on it was obvious Max's main rival in the race would be Hamilton.

Lewis delayed his pitstop to lap 29 and moved to hards, making it clear that he wasn't going to stop again. Most of the teams tried to avoid using the hard owing to lack of data from Friday running, so Mercedes' strategy call was a gamble of sorts. But it paid off: Hamilton produced a series of fastest laps and should have been in the lead after Verstappen and Leclerc's second pitstops.

PICTURES: STEVEN TEE; MARK SUTTON; ALASTAIR STALEY



VSC for the removal of Yuki Tsunoda's car (above) enabled Verstappen to pit (below) and set conspiracy theorists frothing

But then Yuki Tsunoda stopped at the side of the track with a technical issue. The VSC gave Verstappen a free stop and he kept the lead.

The question of the ultimate winner was virtually settled from that point. Valtteri Bottas halting at the end of the main straight brought out the Safety Car – this time the real one, with Bernd Mayländer behind the wheel – but it made little difference to Max. He ceded the lead to Hamilton with another pitstop but overtook him on the restart with the help of fresher tyres. Mercedes decided not to pit Lewis in order to have at least a minimal chance of winning the race, but that decision ultimately cost him a podium spot since he was overtaken by team-mate George Russell and Leclerc in the closing stages of the race.



2 Tsunoda retirement outrages tinfoil-hat community

For arguably the first time since his Formula 1 debut, when after the Bahrain race in 2021 he was labelled a “future world champion,” Yuki Tsunoda was properly back in the spotlight. This time for all the wrong reasons, though.

The Japanese driver had a pretty solid weekend at Zandvoort, qualifying ahead of team-mate Pierre Gasly and running just outside of the top 10. But, after a pitstop on lap 42, he felt something was wrong with his car. Thinking the team hadn't fitted one of his wheels properly, Tsunoda pulled

over and prepared to retire from the race – but the team asked him to continue, since his belief seemed to be contradicted by the data. Yuki returned to the pits and was sent back out a new set of tyres, only to find that the issue remained. Tsunoda just hadn't quite identified it correctly: it wasn't a loose wheel, but the first stages of a differential failure which would force him to stop on track.

Race control activated the VSC while the stranded AlphaTauri was removed and, as a consequence of the timing, Max Verstappen was able to make a free pitstop which kept him in the lead. As soon as it became clear the VSC had played into the hands of Max and his team, the directors of the official F1 broadcast obligingly cut to a shot of a smiling Red Bull strategist Hannah Schmitz.

And before you could say *post hoc ergo propter hoc* the amateur detectives of social media had put together the ‘real’ picture of what had happened: Red Bull had used one of

the drivers of its sister team to ensure Verstappen's victory on his home track.

The fallacy gained sufficient traction for offensive messages to be directed towards Red Bull and its strategist, in sufficient numbers for AlphaTauri to publish an official response.

“It is incredibly disheartening to read some of the language and comments directed at our team and towards Red Bull Racing's Head of Strategy, Hannah Schmitz,” it said. “Such hateful behaviour cannot be tolerated, and to entertain accusations of foul play is unacceptable, untrue and completely disrespectful towards both Hannah and us. We have always competed independently, fairly and with the highest levels of respect and sportsmanship.”

Tsunoda himself advised those who were circulating conspiracy theories about his Dutch GP retirement to seek medical help.

“I want to actually ask how your brain looks like,” he said. “Scan the MRI and see what's wrong. It's funny how they create the story.” ▶



FINISHING STRAIGHT

RACE DEBRIEF

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 15



Lewis led after the Safety Car period (above) but was powerless to hold off Max (below)



3 Hamilton apologises to team for radio rant

Lewis could have won the Dutch Grand Prix. He was arguably the quickest driver at Zandvoort but circumstances went against him – both on Saturday, when Sergio Pérez's off prevented him from fighting for pole, and on Sunday.

Hamilton became a victim of two Safety Car periods – one virtual, one real – first losing a chance to fight for victory, and then a podium as well.

When Valtteri Bottas's Alfa Romeo stopped at the entry to the first corner with 17 laps to go, Mercedes decided not to change Lewis's tyres. That put him in the lead when Max Verstappen pitted but the team's plan proved far too ambitious. Hamilton not only failed to hold off Verstappen, but also lost out to George Russell and Charles Leclerc, both of whom also pitted for new tyres.

As the final laps of the race played out, Lewis vented his frustration at the Mercedes strategy call on the radio: "I can't believe you guys screwed me like that, I can't tell you how pissed I am right now."

It's possible he was angry the team had pitted Russell, who could be an extra buffer between himself and Verstappen on the restart. But Max would almost certainly have passed them both in those circumstances – or so Mercedes believed.

After hearing the team's explanation, Lewis was apologetic about his outburst.

"We had pace and the car was different to how it has been all year long," he explained. "Then I got up to second, I had the hard tyre on and I was catching them and I thought we might be fighting for a win here, potentially a 1-2, and of course Safety Cars and all that came, so my emotions were all over as I knew at that point I had lost it."

"I don't apologise for my passion because that is how I am made and I don't always get it right, but I am sorry to my team for what I said because it was in the heat of the moment."

4 Sainz's pitstop double nightmare

While Max Verstappen has developed an ability to shrug off adversity, Ferrari seems unable to leave a circuit in 2022 without falling foul of some blunder or other. This time it was Carlos Sainz who suffered the team's curse.

While Sainz struggled to match team-mate Leclerc's pace, in theory he could have fought for one of the podium positions since he was running third before his first pitstop. After that stop the podium was no longer an option.

As Carlos arrived in the box, the mechanics only had three wheels ready. The fourth – the rear left – arrived in the right position 10 seconds later.

Team principal Mattia Binotto explained that the call to bring Sainz in was made very late, and was prompted by the desire to prevent Hamilton from undercutting him. That explanation left many observers puzzled, though, since Lewis had started on mediums and was highly unlikely to pit before Sainz. Whether the explanation was accurate or not, the 12-second stop still represents a reason for concern about the Italian squad's operations.

Carlos recovered to fifth, but lost another three places after the finish because of an issue at his second stop. The stewards handed him a five-second penalty for an unsafe release, since Fernando Alonso had to brake to avoid a crash with his compatriot in the pitlane.

Sainz pointed out that he was trying to avoid one of the McLaren mechanics when he strayed into



Alonso's path. "I thought I had saved someone's life and not generated a dangerous situation," he argued. But the FIA had already decided by then that it was still Ferrari's responsibility to take into account all relevant factors.

5 Alonso magic salvages points finish

The evergreen Fernando Alonso produced yet another impressive drive at Zandvoort.

Having been eliminated in Q2 because of traffic, he was one of a few drivers to benefit from using the hard compound in the race. Alpine's strategy call to make an early stop for the hards enabled him to go from 13th to 7th. He then gained another

Carlos Sainz was the unlucky recipient of yet another Ferrari error, and it ruined his race

position when Carlos Sainz was penalised for an unsafe release in the pits – a penalty which Carlos, for one, thought Alonso had played for by engaging in some amateur dramatics.

"I'm pretty sure Fernando exaggerated a bit, hitting me and all that to try and get me a penalty," complained Sainz. But Alonso wouldn't be Alonso if he'd missed such an opportunity.

The 41-year old was delighted with his own performance. "It was 70 laps of qualifying today because we could not relax at any point," said Alonso after the race.

Esteban Ocon finished ninth, making sure Alpine extended its gap to McLaren in the fight for fourth in the constructors' championship.

Alonso made the early switch to hard tyres work to finish sixth from 13th on the grid



RESULTS ROUND 15

ZANDVOORT / 04.09.22 / 72 LAPS



1st	Max Verstappen	Red Bull	1h36m42.773s
2nd	George Russell	Mercedes	+4.071s
3rd	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	+10.929s
4th	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	+13.016s
5th	Sergio Pérez	Red Bull	+18.168s
6th	Fernando Alonso	Alpine	+18.754s
7th	Lando Norris	McLaren	+19.306s
8th	Carlos Sainz	Ferrari	+20.916s*
9th	Esteban Ocon	Alpine	+21.117s
10th	Lance Stroll	Aston Martin	+22.459s
11th	Pierre Gasly	AlphaTauri	+27.009s
12th	Alex Albon	Williams	+30.390s
13th	Mick Schumacher	Haas	+32.995s
14th	Sebastian Vettel	Aston Martin	+36.007s**
15th	Kevin Magnussen	Haas	+36.869s
16th	Zhou Guanyu	Alfa Romeo	+37.320s
17th	Daniel Ricciardo	McLaren	+37.764s
18th	Nicholas Latifi	Williams	+1 lap

Retirements

Valtteri Bottas	Alfa Romeo	53 laps - fuel system
Yuki Tsunoda	AlphaTauri	43 laps - differential

Fastest lap

Max Verstappen 1m13.652s on lap 62

TYRE COMPOUNDS USED



CLIMATE



AIR TEMP

24°C

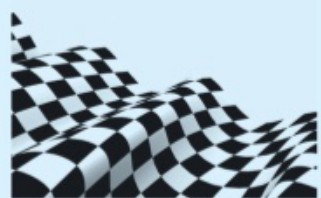
TRACK TEMP

35°C

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

1 Verstappen	310pts	12 Vettel	20pts
2 Leclerc	201pts	13 Ricciardo	19pts
3 Pérez	201pts	14 Gasly	18pts
4 Russell	188pts	15 Schumacher	12pts
5 Sainz	175pts	16 Tsunoda	11pts
6 Hamilton	158pts	17 Guanyu	5pts
7 Norris	82pts	18 Stroll	5pts
8 Ocon	66pts	19 Albon	4pts
9 Alonso	59pts	20 Latifi	0pts
10 Bottas	46pts	21 Hülkenberg	0pts
11 Magnussen	22pts		





FINISHING STRAIGHT

RACE DEBRIEF

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 16

THE ITALIAN GP IN 5 KEY MOMENTS

1 Safety over spectacle as Verstappen wins behind Safety Car

Churlish booing echoed around Monza after the Italian Grand Prix finished under full-course-yellow conditions with Max Verstappen's Red Bull ahead of plucky Charles Leclerc's Ferrari. In truth, though, it was highly likely Verstappen would have prevailed even if the race had been allowed to restart.

The signs were there from the beginning of the weekend when the RB18s rolled out of the garage with more deeply dished rear wings than one might expect at this high-speed circuit. All through this season the Honda engine's delivery characteristics, biased towards the top end, have given Red Bull the advantage in a straight line. At Monza the team was confident enough in its package to add

downforce, boosting the RB18's ability to carry speed through the corners and theoretically trading some of that top-end speed to offset the Ferrari's traditional punch out of corners.

Red Bull's car is also kinder to its tyres than Ferrari's F1-75 and this is the advantage which would prove decisive. Leclerc qualified on pole by 0.145s from Verstappen but Ferrari was always chasing this race even though Max started from seventh place thanks to a power unit penalty. Such was Red Bull's optimism that it agreed to Honda's suggestion of adding a new internal combustion engine to Verstappen's pool in case of failures later in the season.

This being a circuit on which it's possible to pass, the grid for the Italian GP was bent out of shape by penalties for engine changes dictated by strategy as well as necessity. The FIA's official documentation went through several iterations as frontrunners Carlos Sainz, Sergio Pérez and Lewis Hamilton incurred penalties along with midfielders Esteban Ocon, Yuki Tsunoda, Kevin Magnussen and Mick Schumacher.

This elevated George Russell to the front row alongside Leclerc with the McLarens of Lando Norris and Daniel Ricciardo behind. Pierre Gasly and Fernando Alonso acted as the next line of defence from Verstappen for Leclerc. Still Ferrari knew it



Monza was Verstappen's 11th win of 2022 and would probably have happened even if the race hadn't finished behind the Safety Car

PICTURES: STEVEN TEE; MARK SUTTON; ZAK MAUGER



received a surprise phone call: rather than talking to Mercedes sponsors and then appearing as a pundit on F1TV, he would be replacing the unwell Alex Albon at Williams.

The FW44 is quick in a straight line and could reasonably be expected to perform well at Monza, but Latifi was eliminated in Q1 while de Vries made it through to Q2. The Dutch debutant then missed

From his FP1 experience with Aston to scoring points on his race debut with Williams (below), de Vries (left) had an impressive Italian GP



would have to be bold on strategy to resist Max's charge: Leclerc, like Russell – and Verstappen – started the race on Pirelli's soft tyres and with a mandate to open as much of a gap as possible.

At the start Leclerc rebuffed a challenge from the fast-starting Russell (who had to use the run-off at the first chicane) but Verstappen was already slicing his way through the field. By lap five he had despatched Russell for second place and was sitting comfortably within range of Leclerc.

When Sebastian Vettel parked his Aston Martin on lap 11, Ferrari used the resulting Virtual Safety Car to pit Leclerc for fresh mediums. Red Bull's mechanics were ready for Verstappen but, seeing this, stood down. Ferrari's only chance of victory would be for Leclerc to retake the lead when Max pitted and make his own tyres last to the end.

It was not to be. Max eked his softs out until the end of lap 25. Ferrari capitulated to the inevitable and brought Charles in for another set of softs at the end of lap 33. They were running one-two but separated by 8 seconds when Ricciardo's McLaren halted between the two Lesmos with seven laps remaining.

The resulting Safety Car might have teed up a grandstand finish. Both leaders pitted for softs but this, along with them respecting the minimum laptime delta, meant the Safety Car initially picked

up third-placed Russell instead. Then Ricciardo's car took longer to move than expected, since it was stuck in gear. The laps ticked by and there was no chance for a restart.

2 De Vries aced 'job interview' as Albon cover

It is known that the new owners of Williams have serious ambitions and have empowered team principal Jost Capito to achieve them. As a consequence the Sofina sponsorship Nicholas Latifi brings may not be enough for him to keep his seat – a situation thrown into stark relief on a weekend when the amiable Canadian was thoroughly outshone by 'super sub' Nyck de Vries.

27-year-old de Vries won the Formula 2 championship in 2019 after being dropped from the McLaren young driver programme. There were no driving opportunities for him in F1 but Mercedes took him on as a test driver and placed him in Formula E, where he won the title in the 2020-21 season. He drove Sebastian Vettel's Aston Martin in FP1 at Monza and was enjoying a coffee in the Paddock Club on Saturday morning when he

the cut for Q3 after accidentally knocking the brake bias switch on his final Q2 run and locking his rear wheels into the second chicane.

A raft of engine penalties for drivers ahead elevated de Vries to eighth on the grid and Williams gave him an aggressive strategy: a one-stop in which he started on softs then moved to mediums. He had neither completed a race simulation on these tyres nor done any meaningful running on full tanks ahead of the race.

De Vries made a solid getaway from the grid, briefly moving ahead of the slow-starting Lando Norris before yielding into the first chicane, and spent the first part of the race in a DRS train headed by the other McLaren of Daniel Ricciardo. While he eventually lost positions to out-of-position cars coming through – Lewis Hamilton, Carlos Sainz and Sergio Pérez – he clung on to the top 10, defending strongly against the Alfa Romeo of Zhou Guanyu and then picking up another place when Ricciardo retired. A wrist-slap for driving erratically behind the Safety Car was his only demerit from the weekend.

"This world is very volatile and not only merit counts," he replied diplomatically when asked if this performance constituted a successful 'job interview' for the second Williams seat. "It's out of my control. But no one can take this away from me." ▶



RACE DEBRIEF

FINISHING STRAIGHT

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 16



Norris (above and below) provided McLaren with a much-needed boost in its constructors' championship battle for fourth with Alpine



3 Norris stars as McLaren claws back ground on Alpine

Such has been the soap opera over McLaren's 2023 driver line-up that its declining 2022 form had assumed the role of background noise in recent races. At Monza the team (perhaps temporarily) arrested the swing in favour of Alpine in the battle for fourth in the constructors' championship.

Lando Norris was once again McLaren's star

performer, lapping close to Mercedes pace in Q3. Daniel Ricciardo lined up alongside him, his first time in Q3 since Hungary, but he was three tenths off.

Norris made a small but costly error on the formation lap, arriving with the wrong settings selected, and, as the lights went out, his car went into anti-stall. That cost him four positions and

meant he spent the first stint in a DRS train led by his fourth-placed team-mate. Norris was able to make his medium-compound tyres last until the end of lap 35 before he dived in for new softs, and should have emerged ahead of Ricciardo – but a delay in the stop meant he slotted back in ninth instead of seventh.

The soft was the best tyre to be on at this point in the race, a point Norris emphasised as he quickly passed Gasly and Ricciardo, who had pitted for hards at the end of lap 19. Still, Daniel might have finished eighth but for the oil leak which halted him.

By that point Esteban Ocon was Alpine's sole representative in the race, Fernando Alonso having been called in to retire with a loss of water pressure. Ocon had failed to make Q3 and, like Ricciardo, was saddled with a strategy that called for him to perform a long second stint on the unfancied hard tyre.

While Alonso had been in a position to bother Norris, who held seventh until the finish, Ocon was 11th and well adrift of 10th-placed Zhou Guanyu before the late Safety Car period. As such Alpine scored no points, and Norris helped McLaren to narrow the gap between them to 18 points.

4 Sainz wins the battle of the penalised

Graham Hill used to joke that you met a better class of person at the back end of the grid. Whether that remains true or not, or was ever true at all, there was certainly a concentration of star power at the tail end of the Monza starting order thanks to engine penalties for Sergio Pérez, Carlos Sainz and Lewis Hamilton (whose previous PU failed to survive its hard landing on the first lap in Belgium).

Pérez had the fewest and lined up 13th (he had been an absurd 0.9s slower than his team-mate in Q3), while Sainz and Hamilton were 18th and 19th, ahead of only Yuki Tsunoda, who was on the naughty step after accumulating two separate conduct-related penalties as well as PU-related ones. Sainz had a mighty first lap, Pérez less so, while Hamilton played his way into the race in a W13 which lacked balance and rear-end grip.

Very quickly Sainz got the better of Pérez to run 14th, with the second Red Bull in 15th. By lap 7 Carlos had joined the six-car DRS train led by fourth-placed Ricciardo, while Pérez was making such heavy weather of clearing the two Aston Martins that Red Bull pulled him in for a set of hard-compound Pirellis at the end of that lap.



As he left the pits, flames were tickling around his right-front brake vents.

Sainz worked through the DRS train while keeping his medium-compound Pirellis alive until the end of lap 30, when he fitted softs. That put him behind Pérez but the 23-lap tyre offset enabled him to make short work of the Red Bull. At the end of lap 42, with Hamilton catching up rapidly, Pérez would stop again.

Lewis had hung on through his first stint and stretched his mediums out to the end of lap 35, by which time team-mate Russell had gone on to hards and found them not to his liking. Hamilton was now far enough into the race to take on softs, facilitating his push to finish fifth behind Sainz.

5 Another quietly excellent race for Gasly

Throughout 2022 – and, you might say, through previous seasons too – Pierre Gasly has unostentatiously worked miracles in ho-hum AlphaTauri machinery. Indeed, the most conspicuous of the team’s drivers is the incident-magnet Yuki Tsunoda, at the back of the grid

Sainz ended up being the best of the drivers who took heavy engine penalties at Monza

in Monza for accumulating more than the permitted quota of reprimands as well as failing to observe a yellow flag, on top of a handful of PU-related penalties.

Around Monza the AT03 car palpably lacked the downforce to prevent it being skittery even at high speeds, and Gasly did well to proceed to Q3 (to be fair, the team elected not to run Tsunoda at all in Q2, so no comparison is possible there). Exceeding track limits at the second Lesmo in Q3 caused the quicker of his two runs to be struck off, though, which meant he lined up behind Ricciardo’s McLaren on the final grid. He then got stuck behind him in the race.

Gasly maintained pressure on Ricciardo but the Australian didn’t put a wheel wrong until he retired, leaving Gasly a mildly frustrated eighth.

“I’ll definitely have nightmares of Daniel’s rear wing over the next couple of days,” said Gasly, who is widely tipped to be a candidate for the Alpine seat vacated by Fernando Alonso.

Gasly put in another good drive in the less-than-impressive AT03 to finish eighth



RESULTS ROUND 16

MONZA / 11.09.22 / 53 LAPS



1st	Max Verstappen Red Bull	1h20m27.511s
2nd	Charles Leclerc Ferrari	+2.446s
3rd	George Russell Mercedes	+3.405s
4th	Carlos Sainz Ferrari	+5.061s
5th	Lewis Hamilton Mercedes	+5.380s
6th	Sergio Pérez Red Bull	+6.091s
7th	Lando Norris McLaren	+6.207s
8th	Pierre Gasly AlphaTauri	+6.396s
9th	Nyck de Vries Williams	+7.122s
10th	Zhou Guanyu Alfa Romeo	+7.910s
11th	Esteban Ocon Alpine	+8.323s
12th	Mick Schumacher Haas	+8.549s
13th	Valtteri Bottas Alfa Romeo	+1 lap
14th	Yuki Tsunoda AlphaTauri	+1 lap
15th	Nicholas Latifi Williams	+1 lap
16th	Kevin Magnussen Haas	+1 lap

Retirements

Daniel Ricciardo McLaren	45 laps -oil leak
Lance Stroll Aston Martin	39 laps - precautionary
Fernando Alonso Alpine	31 laps - water pressure
Sebastian Vettel Aston Martin	10 laps - ERS

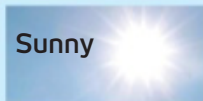
Fastest lap

Sergio Pérez 1m24.030s on lap 46

TYRE COMPOUNDS USED



CLIMATE



AIR TEMP

31°C

TRACK TEMP

42°C

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

1 Verstappen	335pts	12 Magnussen	22pts
2 Leclerc	219pts	13 Vettel	20pts
3 Pérez	210pts	14 Ricciardo	19pts
4 Russell	203pts	15 Schumacher	12pts
5 Sainz	187pts	16 Tsunoda	11pts
6 Hamilton	168pts	17 Guanyu	6pts
7 Norris	88pts	18 Stroll	5pts
8 Ocon	66pts	19 Albon	4pts
9 Alonso	59pts	20 De Vries	2pts
10 Bottas	46pts	21 Latifi	0pts
11 Gasly	22pts	22 Hülkenberg	0pts





FINISHING STRAIGHT

RACE PREVIEW

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 17

SINGAPORE GP

30 September-2 October 2022
Marina Bay



PICTURE: LIONEL NG. ILLUSTRATION: ALAN ELDREDGE



RACE DATA

Venue Marina Bay
Street Circuit
First GP 2008
Number of laps 61
Circuit length 3.146 miles
Race distance 191.821 miles
Lap record 1m 41.905 secs
Kevin Magnussen (2018)
F1 races held 12
Winners from pole 8
Pirelli compounds C3, C4, C5

CAR PERFORMANCE

Downforce level High
Cooling requirement High
Full throttle 45%
Top speed 190mph
Average speed 104mph

TIMETABLE (UK TIME)

Friday 30 September
Practice 1 11:00-12:00
Practice 2 14:00-15:00
Saturday 1 October
Practice 3 11:00-12:00
Qualifying 14:00-15:00
Sunday 2 October
Race 13:00
Live coverage Sky Sports F1
Highlights Channel 4

THE MAIN EVENT

Formula 1's original night race remains one of the toughest physical and mental challenges on the calendar owing to the remorseless rhythm of the lap, the proximity of the barriers, and the attritional effects of the equatorial humidity. Drivers often lose as much as 4kg of bodyweight during the GP through perspiration; worse, since this event is an incident magnet, Safety Car deployments usually means the race runs right to the two-hour cut-off.

Still, it's a popular return for a venue which has been off the calendar during the pandemic. Not only is Singapore a fascinating destination, it's a business hub – and it's during this weekend where many of the commercial deals for the following season are tied up. Generally in a nice, air-conditioned hospitality suite of course...

2019 RACE RECAP

Think back to the halcyon days of Ferrari 1-2 finishes. This was perhaps not one of them; for while the headline result was Sebastian Vettel winning ahead of Ferrari team-mate Charles Leclerc, there was discord in the ranks because Leclerc felt he had been stitched up by his own team.

The key moment came at the first pitstops. Vettel had been running third behind Lewis Hamilton and Leclerc, but Hamilton had been leading the field round at a very conservative pace to preserve his tyres. Ferrari pitted Vettel first to undercut Hamilton and naturally Seb undercut Charles too. Mercedes kept Hamilton out too long and he lost track position, eventually crossing the line fourth behind Max Verstappen.

KEY CORNER: TURN 1 This track's most natural passing place, despite the addition of a third DRS zone between Turns 13 and 14, since the run-off area is the most forgiving on the circuit. A botched pass here doesn't necessarily mean a date with the wall.



THE PAST FIVE WINNERS HERE



2019
Sebastian
Vettel
Ferrari



2018
Lewis
Hamilton
Mercedes



2017
Lewis
Hamilton
Mercedes



2016
Nico
Rosberg
Mercedes



2015
Sebastian
Vettel
Ferrari



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FINISHING STRAIGHT

RACE PREVIEW

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 18

JAPANESE GP

7-9 October 2022

Suzuka



PICTURE: ANDY HONE. ILLUSTRATION: ALAN ELDREDGE

THE MAIN EVENT

Another returnee after two seasons out of the calendar owing to the pandemic, Suzuka is one of the most highly rated drivers' circuits. Quite frankly, getting there is a challenge in itself thanks to the rural location – this year even more so thanks to extra-tough entry visa regulations. The teams' logistics people will have been more than earning their salaries sorting that out...

Suzuka's figure-of-eight layout is unique in the F1 calendar, and there are plenty of tricky corners which reward finesse as well as downforce – not just the delightful Esses, but also the Spoon, which requires drivers to blend out of the brakes with pinpoint judgement or risk locking an inside-front wheel as the curve tightens. Overtaking is problematic but not impossible.

2019 RACE RECAP

Not for the first time in this race's history, a passing typhoon caused Saturday's running to be cancelled and qualifying was held on Sunday morning. The race itself was also packed with incident as polesitter Sebastian Vettel almost jumped the start in his Ferrari, then flunked his actual getaway. Team-mate Charles Leclerc then clattered into Max Verstappen.

Lewis Hamilton could have taken advantage but lost the lead – and potential victory – when Mercedes extended his first stint and then put him on medium tyres, hoping he could get to the end on them. He couldn't, and a second stop put him behind his team-mate Valtteri Bottas and Vettel.

KEY CORNER: TURNS 16/17 Not the most exciting corner on the track but the one where most overtaking attempts are launched. The chicane has been reconfigured since the notorious incident between Alain Prost and Ayrton Senna in 1989 but remains one of F1's great booby traps.



RACE DATA

Venue Suzuka International

Racing Course

First GP 1987**Number of laps** 53**Circuit length** 3.608 miles**Race distance** 191.053 miles**Lap record** 1m30.983s

Lewis Hamilton (2019)

F1 races held 31**Winners from pole** 15**Pirelli compounds** C1, C2, C3

CAR PERFORMANCE

Downforce level High**Cooling requirement** Medium**Full throttle** 66%**Top speed** 204mph**Average speed** 141mph

TIMETABLE (UK TIME)

Friday 7 October**Practice 1** 04:00-05:00**Practice 2** 07:00-08:00**Saturday** 8 October**Practice 3** 04:00-05:00**Qualifying** 07:00-08:00**Sunday** 9 October**Race** 06:00**Live coverage** Sky Sports F1**Highlights** Channel 4

THE PAST FIVE WINNERS HERE



2019

Valtteri
Bottas
Mercedes

2018

Lewis
Hamilton
Mercedes

2017

Lewis
Hamilton
Mercedes

2016

Nico
Rosberg
Mercedes

2015

Lewis
Hamilton
Mercedes

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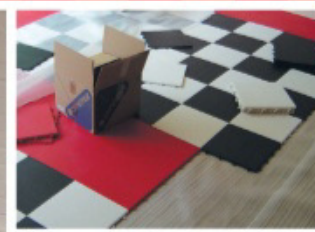
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While we’ve grown used to annual updates to Codemasters’ action-packed licensed Formula 1 franchise, strategy games based in our world have come and gone without leaving much of a long-term impact.

This may all be about to change with the arrival of F1 Manager, potentially the beginning of a new franchise, and the work of Frontier Developments – renowned for Elite and a host of other titles blending action and strategy.

The game pitches you into the high-pressure role of team principal, juggling development focus against financial resources between weekends and then trying to maximise performance on track.

Races play out in real time as you direct strategy, with a choice of views – as blobs going around the track, like on a real pitwall, or switch to a 3D-modelled trackside camera. Commentary by David Croft and Karun Chandhok adds to the authentic flavour, as does a dynamic weather system.



AVI-8 HAWKER HURRICANE CLOWES AUTOMATIC

Price £295-330

avi-8.co.uk

Styled in the manner of a classic pilot’s watch, the Avi-8 Hawker Hurricane Clowes Automatic honours Pilot Officer Arthur Victor ‘Taffy’ Clowes of the RAF’s No. 1 Squadron, a decorated WWII fighter pilot. The 46mm case and conical crown reflect the style of the 1940s while the moulded dial features a camouflage pattern inspired by the Hawker Hurricanes flown by Clowes and his squadron. His aircraft code is printed beneath the hands, while the squadron motto *in omnibus princeps* (‘first in all things’) runs around the bottom of the dial.

The four watches in the Clowes Automatic collection are named after the bases used by No. 1 Squadron during WWII (Wittering, Acklington, Kenley and Northolt). Each features an engraving of the Squadron’s logo on the case back, plus a tapering hand-crafted leather strap.





OGIO X ASTON MARTIN

Price £89-£299

eu.ogio.com

Premium brand Ogio is the Aston Martin F1 team's official luggage supplier and has recently released two of its team product lines to consumers. The Axle laptop backpack is made from durable materials and includes a 17-inch laptop compartment with a folding aperture which makes it easy to remove your computer while passing through security. In team tie-in form it comes in Aston Martin F1 colours

with the logo emblazoned on the back and luminous yellow highlights.

The Rig 9800 kit bag has long been popular with travelling cyclists as well as the motorsport fraternity on account of its tough build and 123 litres of storage. A plethora of internal pockets and dividers render the space flexible, and the extendable handle is complemented by grab straps enabling it to be scooped up from airport carousels.



TAG HEUER CARRERA RED DIAL LTD EDITION

Price £5,600

tagheuer.com

Jack Heuer's landmark timepiece, the Carrera, celebrates its 60th anniversary next year. Ruggedly engineered and designed around a clean aesthetic with legibility in mind, the timepiece naturally found favour with racing drivers and the company has been evolving it ever since. The current Carrera retains the silhouette of the original reference 2447 model but is scaled up to accommodate

modern tastes, with a 39mm casing.

Limited to 600, the Red Dial is identical to regular Carreras under the hood, based around a Calibre Heuer 02 movement with an 80-hour power reserve. The sunray-brushed face features an unusual (but not unique in Heuer's history) red lustre, while the three chronographs counters bring "a subtle contrast and mesmerising play of light to the wrist".





FINISHING STRAIGHT

THE FINAL LAP



FLAT CHAT

{ FULL THROTTLE MUSINGS WITH **MATT KEW** }

LOSE ON SUNDAY, SELL UP ON MONDAY

Formula 1 is not a school sports day where everyone goes home with a medal. No, it's where money and meritocracy meet to ensure the most successful teams are the ones that are slickest run and backed by deep pockets – even with cost caps.

Audi wants to prove it can cut it among the best with a nascent engine programme and eventual Sauber tie-up for 2026. Former Volkswagen Group CEO Herbert Diess publicly listed beating Daimler on track and at the forecourts as the reason for entering. Audi took an unsubtle swipe at the Silver Arrows, declaring this will be “the first time in more than a decade that a Formula 1 powertrain will be built in Germany” (take that, Brixworth!), while the social media posts were about the four rings becoming “the new stars”.

Whether that's entertaining needle or simply needless, to beat Mercedes Audi will by definition have to be fighting at the front. Big boss Markus

Duesmann said as much at Spa. He stated: “Ideally within the first three years, we should be very competitive.” But for Audi to score podiums and wins, it will have to do so at the expense of other marques with similarly lofty ambitions.

This comes as the headcount for pukka road car manufacturers could still climb. Audi joins



Audi has finally announced its F1 entry (above), Alpine's sole win (below) could make it vulnerable if Renault decides to cash out



Ferrari, Mercedes and Alpine, while Honda appears to have rediscovered its interest in F1 and Porsche, having backed away from Red Bull, may yet go to the altar with another outfit. Because the race team and power unit cost caps are known, at least three of the factory programmes can be assumed to be writing an annual cheque of around £235m

– excluding team boss and driver salaries plus various promo costs.

Since these works F1 set ups must answer to boardrooms and validate themselves on a spreadsheet, at some point there's an expectation to hit that corporate buzz-phrase ‘return on investment’. In other words, when the racing justifies itself by recouping costs via the ‘win on Sunday, sell on Monday’ adage.

But what if they do neither? As the 2009 financial crisis showed, manufacturers are all too happy to exit stage left if they're haemorrhaging money but not adding to the trophy cabinet. When financial prudence is required, profligate motorsport activities are the first in line for the axe.

Following this logic, surely Alpine is most at risk of being cut loose by its parent company. It's won only once since its 2016 return, and as a branding exercise the Alpine moniker still doesn't carry much cachet. And numerous internal sources corroborate rumours that the Enstone factory and engine facility in Viry-Chatillon don't always interact harmoniously.

Then there's what Fernando Alonso's switch to Aston Martin for 2023 reveals. He reckons: “No one in F1 is demonstrating a greater vision and absolute commitment to winning [than Aston], and that makes it a really exciting opportunity for me.” In the first instance, those words acknowledge Lawrence Stroll pouring in the cash to build a new factory. In the second, it implies that Alpine (fourth in the constructors' compared to Aston in ninth) has a lower ceiling. That's a worry, since Enstone has already received its big-budget redevelopment after the former Lotus tenant neglected its upkeep.

Conceivably, F1's current commercial success and its huge audience are sufficiently lucrative to offset big spending and midfield running, so that no manufacturer feels the need to sell up and see how accurate the current suggestion of a £500m asking price for a team really is. But of them, perhaps the Renault Group is most tempted to find out.

PICTURES: SAM BLOXHAM; FIA POOL; ILLUSTRATION: BENJAMIN WACHENIE

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